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ABSTRACT

A 5-year plan to improve the delivery of services to special needs students was evaluated in Fairbanks, Alaska. The plan focused on developing a model for integrated services and reducing the number of pull-out programs by having special services staff work directly with classroom teachers. Information sources included interviews with 62 staff members and 71 parents at 6 schools. Background information is provided on types of existing services in the school district, as well as the perceptions of principals regarding integration of special services. Attention is also directed to survey results from special program staff regarding integration of services for students who are learning disabled, communication disordered, gifted/talented, emotionally impaired, mentally retarded, and deaf. Also considered are integration of services in the following programs: Chapter I reading, Chapter I migrant, Alaska Native education, and bilingual/bicultural. Findings indicated that principals are generally supportive of the philosophy of integration for most groups of children, and often the service delivery model is driven by the availability of staffing or resources. (Contains 53 references.) (SW)

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# INTEGRATING SPECIAL SERVICES:

## Seeking a Balance in Meeting Student Needs

Prepared by:

Barbara Pineault, Analyst
Dr. Nicholas Stayrook, Director
Program Planning and Evaluation Department

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November 16, 1993

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## FOREWORD

This report investigates the implementation of a plan to improve the delivery of special services. Although district goals were not adopted by the School Board in the 1988-89 school year, the Superintendent's proposed goals were used for planning. One of these goals was the examination of special services program delivery. The intent of the goal was to examine the coordination of the delivery of special services to children, especially children who were being pulled out of their classrooms to receive special services in one or more areas. In subsequent years, the goal was modified to promote the integration of special programs into the regular classroom, and was formally adopted by the School Board.

This study investigates the process of implementing this change in the delivery of special services over the past five years. Although some information on the perceived effectiveness of this approach is included, the primary purpose of this report is to examine the successes and problems encountered, and make recommendations for improvements. This study should not be construed as an evaluation of the effectiveness of the special services programs provided to students for enhancing student performance.

Background information on the meanings of integration, types of special services provided in our district, and steps taken toward implementing the integration goal is included. The study collected extensive qualitative information through interviews, case studies of particular schools, and questionnaires as its primary sources of information. Conclusions and recommendations presented are those of the authors based on the information gathered, and do not necessarily represent the views of the district administration or the special services department.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## Executive Summary

A study was conducted in the final quarter of the 1992-93 school year to examine the extent to which special services are being integrated into the regular classroom for special needs students. During the 1988-89 school year, the Superintendent proposed a goal to examine the delivery of special services and the district developed a five-year plan for addressing that goal. During these first five years, emphasis was focused on the development of a model to provide consistent and integrated services to identified students, with a secondary goal of reducing the number of pull-out programs by having the special services staff work directly with classroom teachers.

Confusion exists regarding the meaning of *integration* as it applies to the district goal. On the one hand, integration simply means the coordination of special services provided to students so that these special services are not fragmented, duplicated, or a cause for excessive movement into and out of the classroom. On the other hand, *integration* is a specialized term used by staff in special education to refer to the provision of special services in regular classroom settings and not in pull-out programs. The special services department has promoted the use of integration (as defined by special education staff) as the model for providing coordinated services to children.

The process of integrating posed a change in the method of delivering instruction to special needs students; from an emphasis on a "pull-out" model to an integrated model where students receive services in regular classroom settings. The authors used information collected during the course of the study to extract strengths and weaknesses of the integrated model as perceived by district staff. From that information came the identification of key factors for the success of integration and general guidelines regarding students who stand to benefit most from the integrated model. Our study shows that the availability of all placement options is essential for responsible decision making for serving special students. The authors found that integration affects individual classrooms, individual programs, and individual people differently, depending upon the presence or absence of these key factors.

**The key factors on which successful integration is dependent include:**

1) Teacher willingness to integrate special needs students
2) Sufficient planning time and quality communications between the regular teacher and the special services provider
3) Stability in instructional staff within each school
4) Small class sizes
5) Staff personalities
6) Positive working relationships within the school

**The major findings of the study are:**

Different levels of integration are occurring in every school across the district.

Building principals are generally supportive of the philosophy of integration for most groups of children, and support building level innovations developed by school staff.

Some students stand to benefit more from the integrated model than others.

Often the service delivery model is driven by the availability of staffing or resources, regardless of how much school staff believe in the integrated model.

Training for all regular teachers and special program staff is an essential component for successful integration.

The efficacy of the use of integration depends on the number of students to be served, the types of students being served, and the range of the students' needs.

Successful integration is dependent on the coexistence of key factors (listed above).

**Recommendations for continued use of the integration model:**

The decision to provide services to students in the regular classroom or in a pull-out program should be made based on the specific needs of each student and the effectiveness of the program at the particular school.

Clarify to district staff that integration in the regular classroom is one of a range of alternative methods for providing special services to students, and that integration is not the mandated method for providing special services for all students.

Provide training to regular education teachers in how to utilize special services staff in the regular classroom and how to coordinate the special services with the regular instruction.

Find ways for classroom teachers to communicate and plan with special programs staff and special educators to better coordinate services to students.

Review the special services staffing for special needs students, especially for intensive resource students. These students create special concerns for regular classroom teachers who are integrating special services in the regular classroom.

### Recommendation regarding the pull-out model:

The use of the pull-out model may be the most appropriate method for delivering certain types of services to students. Students in the gifted/talented program, Chapter I remedial reading program, or Bilingual/Bicultural program may receive more effective services in a pull-out program. Emotionally impaired students can cause major disruptions in the regular classroom depending on the severity of the student's impairment and should be evaluated individually to determine if the regular classroom or a pull-out program is best for the child. For these types of programs and students, the recommendation is to:

Identify the problems in delivering special services through a pull-out model, and address these problems without eliminating the pull-out programs in the school.

### Summary:

The district should seek a balance in providing special services to students. The decision to use a pull-out program or to integrate services in the regular classroom should be based on the needs of the student. The goal to reduce and/or eliminate pull-out programs in the district should be reconsidered for particular students and particular special programs. The district should not mandate that teachers integrate special needs students in their classrooms, but rather that decision should be based on what is best for the child as determined through discussions with parents, teachers, and administrators.

# INTEGRATING SPECIAL SERVICES:
## Seeking a Balance in Meeting Student Needs

## INTRODUCTION

This study investigates a plan to improve the delivery of special services to students. Five years ago, a district goal providing for the "Examination of Special Services Program Delivery" was proposed by the administration for the 1988-89 school year because of a concern that many students receiving special services were being moved between classrooms and pull-out programs to the extent that the quality of the services received were being negatively affected. Students were receiving services from a number of different special services programs, but these services were not coordinated with each other. Students were being pulled out of the classroom, sometimes two or three times each day, with little knowledge by the classroom teacher as to what the special service provider was doing with the student.

Although the 1988-89 goal was never formally adopted by the School Board, the next year the goal was modified to become the "Integration of Special Services" which was adopted by the School Board. The goal called for an emphasis on the "integration" of special needs students into regular classrooms. Confusion exists in the use of the term "integration." Staff in the Special Education department use the term to refer to the provision of services to students in the "least restrictive environment" for special education. Others use the term to refer to the process of coordinating services for students. The term integration also refers to a management strategy that ensures greater efficiency in the delivery of special services to students. If the major goal of the School Board was to reduce inefficiency in delivering special services, then "integration" as it is defined by Special Education is one way to accomplish this; however, integration as defined by Special Education is not the only way to address the coordination of special services to students.

During the second and subsequent years, the goal to increase integration included a secondary goal for reduction of pull-out programs by having the Special Services staff work directly with classroom teachers (adopted February 6, 1990). Special education programs are required, under Public Law 94-142, to provide educational services to students in the least restrictive environment that is appropriate (Lerner, 1989). The law does not require that every special education student be served in the regular classroom because the law also states that each student should be evaluated individually to determine what constitutes the least restrictive environment for them. The law also requires that a full continuum of placements be available to special students.

Other special service programs (e.g. Alaskan Native Education, Bilingual/Bicultural, Chapter I, and Chapter I - Migrant), do not have a "least restrictive environment" requirement, and have used a pull-out model for delivering services since their inceptions. The decision to address the School Board goal by emphasizing the delivery of services in the regular classroom and not in pull-out programs represented a major change in how special programs would be delivered. Since the special education program was already moving in the direction of providing services in the regular classroom to the extent possible because of "least restrictive environment" requirements, then adding the other special programs under this delivery model seemed to meet the intent of the School Board goal.

Special services to students would be provided in the regular classroom under the direction of the regular classroom teacher. The regular classroom teacher would be able to monitor what each student was receiving, and be able to make sure each child was receiving services which were not fragmented, duplicated, or not relevant to the child's needs.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, no formal examination of the methods of delivering special services to students was completed. The problems encountered using the pull-out model for delivering services were not compiled and addressed on a district level. In fact, in the case of the Chapter I program, the pull-out method of providing services was fairly successful (the district was recognized for its exemplary Chapter I program). With the decision to implement an integration model, efforts were made to reduce or eliminate pull-out programs as opposed to identifying their weaknesses and correcting the problems.

The Program Planning and Evaluation Department conducted this study in the final quarter of the 1992-93 school year to examine the extent to which special services are being integrated for special needs students. This evaluation of the School Board goal occurred in response to inquiries from a variety of people interested in the progress of integration, and as a culmination of a five-year plan the district had developed for meeting the goal to integrate services.

In these first five years, emphasis focused on the development of a model to provide more consistent services to identified students, with the overall goal being a reduction in the number of pull-out programs by having the special services staff work directly with classroom teachers. Providing consistent and coordinated services to students would ensure, according to the intent of the goal, more efficient use of district resources and a more cohesive educational program for students in need of special services.

This study found that integration is a complex issue that depends on a number of key variables which must be in place in order for the model to work successfully for students and staff. The authors learned that integration affects individual classrooms, individual programs, and individual people differently, depending upon the presence or absence of one or more key variables. Changes which occurred as a result of integration are different in each classroom environment depending on the teacher, the mix of students in the class, the teaching styles and personality characteristics of educators who are integrating their services in classrooms.

The district has presented integration as a process, just as any change is a process. Throughout this process, some goals have been accomplished and others have not, often for viable reasons such as staff turnover or high caseloads. When changes in educational programs or program delivery methods are made at the district level, whether it be in curriculum, innovative instructional methods, or service delivery models, intended and unintended outcomes occur. In the case of integration, noteworthy progress toward the goal has been made, although the progress has not necessarily been smooth, consistent, or in all cases appropriate.

Efforts have been made to increase the amount of services provided within regular classroom settings for students in Chapter I, Bilingual/Bicultural, and Alaska Native Education programs. The classroom teacher's role, if that teacher chooses to integrate services, is to provide lesson plans and guidance to program staff and coordinate the instruction that all his or her students receive. Some instances of program coordination are occurring among special programs staff in order to avoid duplication of services but often staff members from the various special programs do not communicate due to transiency between school buildings or scheduling conflicts. Integration of services is occurring for some special education students in resource programs for learning disabilities and speech/language, gifted-talented, emotionally impaired, deaf and hard-of-hearing, intensive resource, and others.

In addition to reporting the extent to which integration is occurring in our district after five years of implementation, this report provides background information on the options available for serving special needs students, defines terminology, and explains the methodology used at various stages of data collection. Careful attention was paid to the collection and analysis of qualitative information gathered through many hours of interviews with program administrators, classroom teachers, specialists, support staff, building principals, and parents. Major findings and recommendations are presented which address issues related to integrating services for special needs children.

The next section of this report will look at the background for the formulation of the board goal, and the varying ways in which the term "integration" is used. This section also includes a discussion of the overlap in providing services to students, and a description of the methodology used for gathering data.

# SECTION I

# BACKGROUND ON THE GOAL TO INTEGRATE SPECIAL SERVICES

This section begins with a discussion of the amount of overlap which exists in providing special services to students. This issue was one of the original reasons an examination of the special services delivery methods needed to be done. Coordinating services to students who are receiving a number of different types of service is important for consistency and effectiveness. This section also reviews how the term "integration" is applied to special education, and the public laws which guide the delivery of special education services. Next, some of the steps taken in implementing the goal toward more integration are reviewed. Finally, this section describes the methodology of the current study.

## NUMBERS OF STUDENTS SERVED AND THE OVERLAP IN SERVICES

Table 1 on the following page presents population figures for students in special education programs, a population that has grown by 32% over the past five years while our overall district enrollment has grown by 13.4% over the same period of time. These figures represent only students who have qualified for services in federally recognized disability categories, and do not include students who may have learning problems caused by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects (FAS/FAE), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), hyperactivity, or behavior problems. In addition to the numbers of students who qualify to receive services through special education, many students are served through the district's other special programs: Chapter I, Bilingual/Bicultural, Alaska Native Education, and Chapter I-Migrant Education. Table 2 in this report shows the numbers of students served in each of these four special program areas and the numbers who receive services in other programs as well. This table illustrates the extent of overlap in the numbers of students who qualified for services through more than one program in the 1992-93 school year.

The issues regarding fragmentation and duplication of services in various special programs are important because of the numbers of students affected by them. One reason that the district examined the delivery of special services was because personnel in the various programs often worked independently of the regular classroom. An important component of integrating services is to encourage coordination between classroom instruction and special instruction designed to meet specific program goals.

Table 1

Enrollments in Special Education*
Over the Past Five School Years

| Handicapping Condition | 1988-89 | 1989-90 | 1990-91 | 1991-92 | 1992-93 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mentally Retarded | 58 | 55 | 62 | 60 | 72 |
| Learning Disabled | 996 | 1002 | 1039 | 1210 | 1220 |
| Emotionally Impaired | 98 | 92 | 79 | 100 | 107 |
| Orthopedically Handicapped | 12 | 11 | 11 | 6 | 5 |
| Communication Disordered | 445 | 526 | 510 | 607 | 618 |
| Visual Impaired | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Health Impaired | 14 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 14 |
| Hearing Impaired/Deaf | 9 | 13 | 12 | 15 | 17 |
| Multiply Handicapped | 50 | 71 | 81 | 122 | 102 |
| Developmentally Delayed | n/a | 17 | 28 | 59 | 60 |
| Gifted-Talented | 558 | 565 | 577 | 712 | 742 |
| Traumatic Brain Injured | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1 | 3 |
| Autistic | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 2243 | 2367 | 2413 | 2909 | 2966 |
| % Growth over 1988-89 | -- | +6% | +8% | +30% | +32% |

* Counts taken at the end of each school year for the State of Alaska Department of Education Special Education Report.

As shown in Table 2 on the next page, many of our students qualify to receive services in more than one area. The unduplicated count of students in Table 2 is 4,339 students or about 28% of the total district enrollment of 15,629 in 1992-93. Clearly the coordination of services is necessary in order to reduce duplication of services to students in different programs and to address the issue of fragmentation of a child's education.

Table 2

Number of students receiving an overlap of instructional services
1992-93 School Year

| | ANE | Biling | Chapt 1 | Migrant | Handicap | Gifted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ANE | 699 | 76 | 59 | 31 | 179 | 9 |
| Biling | | 463 | 27 | 8 | 99 | 0 |
| Chapt 1 | | | 667 | 13 | 124 | 0 |
| Migrant | | | | 148 | 28 | 5 |
| Handicap | | | | | 2218 | 0 |
| Gifted | | | | | | 726 |

Source: Program Planning and Evaluation Department, September, 1993.
Note: Numbers on the diagonal represent the total number of students served in the special program in our public schools (does not include students at ICS or FYF).

## WHAT DOES INTEGRATION MEAN?

There is no one way to define integration, and the absence of a clear definition has resulted in a variety of interpretations and applications. The term means different things to different people and the meaning changes depending upon the context in which it is used. For example, teachers talk about integrating across the curriculum which means subject areas are taught using the same theme. To some, integration may recall efforts to reconcile racial segregation. Integration can mean a blending or consolidation of many parts into a whole, or an interconnectedness as with an integrated circuit. Integration is also a commonly used term in the area of special education and implies providing services to students in regular classroom settings rather than in resource room or self-contained settings.

Considerable confusion exists over the meaning of integration as it is applied to coordinating services for students and applying the term to "least restrictive environment" issues which are specific to special education. There is also confusion about how it happens, and ways that the model can be used to effectively meet student needs.

**What integration means to special education.** In the field of special education, integration means educating a child alongside his or her regular education peers as much as possible, based upon the individual needs of the child. The term has evolved from the term "mainstreaming" which was commonly used two decades ago. Mainstreaming has been typically defined as "the integration of children with learning, behavioral, and/or physical problems into regular education settings and programs unless their problems are so severe that they cannot be accommodated in regular programs" (Cartwright, 1985).

The mainstreaming movement of the 1970's and 1980's did much to decrease the extent to which special education students were segregated from regular education. In our district, the former Birch Elementary School served as a school exclusively for handicapped students from 1965 through 1986. After that, special programs which had been located at Birch were moved to other schools in the district with a heterogenous mix of children. Schools in our district currently house 38 districtwide special education programs. The locations of districtwide special education programs for the 1992-93 school year is shown in Table 3 on the following page. In addition to these districtwide programs, every school has a program for learning disabled students, gifted-talented, and communication disordered (speech/language) children. Schools also serve students in the Chapter I, Alaska Native Education, Bilingual/Bicultural, and Chapter I - Migrant programs. Today, all of our special programs are physically located within regular schools rather than exclusive special education schools. But in our school district, integration means more than locating special programs within school buildings. It has come to mean moving the services provided to special needs students into regular classroom settings.

Integration of services occurs on a continuum and many different activities can be seen as "integrated." This concept caused confusion because the term is subject to misinterpretation. For example, a specialist who comes into a classroom to work with three identified learning disabled children, but who rotates around the classroom helping other students in a journal writing activity is physically "integrated" into the regular classroom, but is not providing direct "integrated" services to the targeted students. Again, the question becomes, "What is integration?" If the class is divided into groups for reading and the Chapter I reading assistant pulls some of her students and some other low functioning or "gray area" students to her group,

## Table 3
## Districtwide Special Education Programs
## 1992-93 School Year

| Elementary School | Name of Special Program | # programs |
|---|---|---|
| Badger Road | Intensive Resource (intermediate grades)<br>Preschool Language<br>Preschool Developmentally Delayed | 3 |
| Barnette | Preschool Language, Preschool Deaf/HI<br>Reverse Mainstream Deaf/HI<br>Emotionally Impaired (primary grades) | 4 |
| Chena | Preschool Developmentally Delayed | 1 |
| Joy | 2 Intensive Resource (primary grades)<br>Severe/Profound Intensive Resource | 3 |
| Ladd | Intensive Resource (intermediate grades)<br>Preschool Developmentally Delayed<br>Emotionally Impaired (elementary) | 3 |
| North Pole Elem | Preschool Language | 1 |
| Pearl Creek | Preschool Language<br>Emotionally Impaired (intermediate grades) | 2 |
| Ticasuk Brown | Severe/Profound Intensive Resource<br>2 Intensive Resource (primary grades)<br>Self-contained LD program (ARC) | 4 |
| University Park | Integrated Primary (K-3)<br>Preschool Developmentally Delayed | 2 |
| Weller | Emotionally Impaired (intermediate) | 1 |
| Woodriver | Emotionally Impaired (primary) | 1 |
| **Secondary School** | | |
| Ben Eielson | Emotionally Impaired | 1 |
| Hutchison | HIRE Program<br>Emotionally Impaired | 2 |
| Lathrop | Emotionally Impaired | 1 |
| North Pole High | Intensive Resource | 1 |
| North Pole Middle | Intensive Resource<br>2 Emotionally Impaired<br>Self-contained LD (ARC) | 4 |
| Ryan | Emotionally Impaired | 1 |
| Tanana | Intensive Resource<br>Emotionally Impaired | 2 |
| West Valley | Intensive Resource<br>Emotionally Impaired | 2 |

the "integration" then becomes an in-class pull-out program. Gray area students can get more attention this way and the pupil/teacher ratio is immediately lowered for all students. The down side is that the classroom tends to be noisier with two teaching groups and some students may be distracted by the activity of the other group. Some educators argue that they do not see the benefit to pulling children aside in the classroom instead of taking them to another quieter place. The issue then becomes one of perceived effectiveness rather than perceived level of implementation.

A fairly new term used with increasing frequency in special education literature today is "inclusion." A recent publication of *Effective Special Services Management, June 1993* describes inclusion as, "to include disabled students with non-disabled students in every aspect of school life." There is no strict legal definition of inclusion. The term is most often used when describing a placement option for students with handicaps that would otherwise qualify them for intensive or self-contained programs, although it can also be applied to resource students. The full inclusion model advocates moving all disabled children into regular classroom settings for most, if not all, of the school day. This differs from the idea of "mainstreaming" special needs children for one or two classes per day (like music or PE), where their main base may be a self-contained special education classroom. But to further confuse the issue, the term *inclusion* is also used by special programs staff to describe the placement of students back into the regular classroom setting after they have reached their goals and exited the special program. It should be noted that the terms mainstreaming, integration, and inclusion are often used by educators interchangeably and trying to define them separately from each other or trying to accurately interpret what someone means by a particular term is difficult. As we look at the results of this study, it is important to differentiate the meanings of the term "integration" of services and the ways in which the term has been applied to service delivery for special learners.

## WHY INTEGRATE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION? A LOOK AT PUBLIC LAWS

**Special Education and Public Laws.** Most of the changes in providing special education to public school children have been a result of Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. This law culminated many years of litigation and legislation, and was reauthorized in 1990 as the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act (P.L. 101-476).

P.L. 94-142 recognized that the more than eight million disabled American children had special education needs that were not being fully met. Specifically, it stated that more than half of these children did not receive appropriate educational services and that one million were being entirely excluded from the public school system. The law placed responsibility for correcting these conditions in the hands of state and local education agencies. This law further stated that many special needs children in the public schools were not succeeding because their needs had gone undetected. The law suggested states use adequate resources, advanced teacher training, and improved diagnostic and instructional procedures to remedy the situation (Cartwright, 1985).

P.L. 94-142 aimed to ensure that all disabled children have available to them a free, appropriate education and that their rights, as well as those of their parents, be protected. It called for students to be served in the least restrictive environment appropriate for them. The issue of "least restrictive environment that is appropriate" is heavily discussed and applicable to the current movement toward integrating services into regular classrooms where, to the extent possible, special needs children are educated alongside their regular education peers.

In recent years, two important events have occurred on a national level which caused school districts to look at their services for special needs students and to devise ways in which their needs can be met in regular education settings. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and the Regular Education Initiative (1986) are briefly described below.

**Section 504** of the Rehabilitation Act was written to ensure equal opportunities for disabled individuals. Proponents increased the focus of Section 504 to include provisions for disabled students in educational settings. This is important to our study of integration of services because Section 504 reaffirms the responsibility of educating students in the regular education program with the regular education curriculum. Often this means adapting materials or instruction in order to meet the needs of students who do not qualify for special education but have needs which must be met through increased efforts and alternative strategies. Section 504, like P.L. 94-142, requires that these students receive a free, appropriate public education.

As this law relates to education, Section 504 "protects all handicapped students, defined as those having any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits any major life activity" including learning (Section 504 Handbook, 1990). The Fairbanks school district, through the Equal Employment Opportunities department, developed a handbook for regular education teachers who are responsible under the law for educating all students, whether they qualify to receive special education services or not. Some examples are students who have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).

During the 1992-1993 school year, presentations were made to teachers in every school which addressed the requirements for meeting the needs of students with handicaps in regular education. Included were discussions of learning modalities and a brief list of ways to accommodate students in the regular classroom. This type of information was designed to increase the success of students in regular classroom settings by providing their regular classroom teachers with suggestions on ways to teach and manage children with a wide range of educational needs, as integration also requires teachers to make use of alternative teaching methods and adaptation of materials to meet student needs.

**The Regular Education Initiative (REI).** About 10 years after the passage of P.L. 94-142 (which brought special needs students into regular education schools), another movement began concerning special needs children. It has come to be known as the Regular Education Initiative (REI). In November of 1986, a report was presented by Madeleine Will, then the Assistant Secretary from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education. The report, entitled *Educating Students with Learning Problems -- A Shared Responsibility*, focused on ways in which our nation's schools might improve the education of students who have learning problems, defined in the REI as follows:

> "The term *learning problems* is used broadly by the author to address children who are having learning difficulties, including those who are learning slowly; those with behavioral problems; those who may be educationally disadvantaged; and those who have mild specific learning disabilities, and emotional problems; and perhaps, as we improve our knowledge, those with more severe disabilities. The author's intent was that the information set forth in this paper provide a basis for discussion, and that it was a culmination of studied thoughts of parents and professionals rather than based upon results of exhaustive research." (Will, 1986).

The report acknowledges the progress of special education programs in helping children with special needs. It also points to problem areas such as the high dropout rate for students with learning problems and identifies the increasing need for remedial instruction for secondary students. This led to a closer review of special programs in an effort to find ways to make education more successful for special needs students. It addressed the concern that the creation of special programs had produced some unintended effects, similar to those which our district recognized five years ago when integration of services for special needs students became a focus of our special services department. What the REI did not do was provide guidelines as to which students would benefit most from an integrated approach.

One of the report's concerns was the eligibility required for a student in need of extra help to receive it. Will writes that, "Not enough attention is given to assessing individual learning needs and tailoring a specific program to meet those needs." In our district, specialists seemed to be doing a lot of tailoring to try to meet the needs of students, but in separate programs and settings. For example, skills which could be mastered in the resource room did not always transfer to regular classroom performance. Concepts learned in the regular classroom were not necessarily reinforced when students received special instruction in the resource room, and this created problems with the ability to provide cohesive and unfragmented programs of instruction to students.

The challenge, as stated in the Will paper, is "to take what we have learned from the special programs and begin to transfer this knowledge to the regular education classroom." This would result in a partnership between regular education and special programs to widen the range of service delivery methods for students. Indeed there is some evidence that it is better academically, socially, and psychologically to educate mildly disabled children with their regular education peers as much as possible within the regular classroom setting. But the success is not automatically guaranteed for either mildly handicapped students nor for students with other special learning problems.

Stigmatization of students and its effect on self-esteem was also discussed as a factor which isolates children with learning problems. The REI reaffirmed the commitment to serve special needs students in the "least restrictive environment that is appropriate" to meet student needs as a measure to reduce stigmatization. According to the REI, for some students, the "pull-out approach" may be appropriate. For others, it's possible to accomplish goals in the regular classroom setting with the proper **adaptation of materials** and **alternative methods of instructional delivery.**

**Changing Philosophies.** The concept of "least restrictive environment (LRE) that is appropriate" is where philosophies are most likely to diverge among capable and conscientious educators. The LRE means something different depending on which students we talk about. For example, for intensive resource children, least restrictive environment usually means the opportunity to interact with regular education peers, more often for social benefits rather than for academic gain. Regular education students learn how to accept other people for who they are. They learn patience and come to realize that just because a student is different doesn't mean he or she doesn't belong. The intensive resource child learns from the regular education students who become role models for appropriate behavior and stimulate the special education child to try new things. In this scenario, least restrictive environment means ensuring opportunities for special students to interact in regular classroom settings, at least for part of the day, rather than being kept strictly in a self-contained special education program.

There are many other ways to integrate students and/or their services. In fact, an entire continuum of possibilities exists, including reverse mainstreaming, where regular education students come into the special program rather than the special needs child going to the regular classroom. The district has a mechanism in place for making placement decisions for special education students. The form on the following page is completed by the Child Study Team in each building for each student who qualifies to receive special education services.

The concept of "least restrictive environment that is appropriate" becomes less clear for programs such as "resource" for students with learning disabilities. The goal for many learning disabled students is to provide them instruction such that at some point they may be able to be successful in the regular education program, in other words, to "exit" them from the special program. In this case, the least restrictive **physical** environment would be the regular classroom. But data gathered from teachers, specialists, and special programs staff in our district indicate the regular classroom setting is not always perceived as being the most "appropriate" setting for meeting a particular student's specific short and long term educational goals.

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District

## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM P-3c

**Justification for Placement**

Date:

Student: ____________________

The following options for placement have been considered for this student in order to ensure that (s)he is placed in the least restrictive environment conducive to his/her needs. It is not necessary to justify non-placement in environments more restrictive than the one(s) agreed to as the least restrictive. More than one placement option may be recommended as appropriate.

| ✓ | Description of Placement | Justification |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ | **Regular Classroom with Additional Support Services (e.g., consultative)** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |
| ☐ | **Regular Classroom with Direct Special Education Services delivered in the regular classroom** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |
| ☐ | **Regular Classroom with Special Education Pull-out** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |
| ☐ | **Regular Classroom with Self-Contained Classroom Support** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |
| ☐ | **Full-time Placement in a Self-Contained Program** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |
| ☐ | **Home-bound and Hospital Instruction** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |
| ☐ | **Institutional Services** | ☐ Least Restricted Environment<br>☐ Not appropriate, due to:<br>☐ Student's behavior ☐ Inappropriate Curriculum<br>☐ Insufficient skills ☐ Individualization needed<br>☐ Other: |

copies: white - certification file yellow - parent pink - working file 2/93

## STEPS TAKEN TOWARD IMPLEMENTING THE GOAL

The goal to begin integrating services for students was tied to implementing the newly adopted language arts curriculum as a vehicle for allowing students to remain in regular education settings. This appeared to make sense, given that so many students needed special services which focused on language acquisition and skills development (Special Services Annual Report, May, 1989). It was believed that overall program efficiency could be improved through the coordination of services to students who qualified for one or more services through Bilingual/Bicultural, Alaska Native Education, Chapter I, and special education.

Staff development occurred for Chapter I reading assistants, liaisons hired through Alaska Native Education, and Bilingual/Bicultural dominant language tutors and tutor instructors on ways to meet student needs in regular classroom settings. Special educators also received training in integrating their services into regular classrooms. Other activities toward this goal included round table discussions between principals and special services administrators. These discussions addressed concerns regarding the shift from providing services independently of the regular classroom to providing congruent services more closely associated with the materials and curriculum of the regular classroom.

Beginning in the 1988-89 school year, an important activity toward integrating special services was to develop building-based plans for serving special needs students in regular classrooms. Site-based management was also being discussed wherein principals were seen as, and expected to be, instructional leaders in their buildings. Thus, schools were given the flexibility to develop plans for integration which best fit their student populations and staff characteristics. Pilot projects began which led to more integration of services to students. The diagram in Appendix C, taken from the *Special Services Annual Report* from the 1988-89 school year shows the complexities of the integration goal.

Much of the discussion at this time centered around what it meant to "integrate" and the various ways building staff could meet program goals through integration. This same school year (1988-89), the district contracted with a group called Education Policy and Program Solutions out of Reston, Virginia to look at the progress the district was making toward integration and to provide recommendations for how to proceed with the inclusion of students into regular education environments. This group had experience in assisting federal, state, and local education agencies in providing programs to students which afforded opportunities for all students to be educated together. The focus of their report was on integration activities for special education students, and not for students in other special programs.

A site visit occurred in April of 1989. Researchers observed classrooms, held interviews with teachers, and reviewed and analyzed district documents. The June 1989 report found strong support among parents and staff for the overall direction and implementation of integrated educational programs. It specified the benefits of school specific alternatives as resulting in innovative and positive efforts to provide quality programs. It also provided eight recommendations for strategies and approaches for further progress in integrating students into least restrictive environments. A summary of the report's findings appears below.

> Recommendations to the district in 1989: establish a clear sense of overall direction at the district level so that local site initiatives are clearly consistent with the overall direction the leadership wishes to take; plan and monitor collaboratively, choosing a few schools and building teams of people; the district adapt internal and external expertise, revise materials to fit the needs of particular schools, and model desired behavior by having the district commit to an "integrated posture" to the extent that good integration practices be rewarded and inequities be met head on; that the district offer training as an integral part of activities.
>
> The study pointed out that the district had rightly left innovations and creativity to the buildings, and that the "nondirective pronouncement" to integrate had created a healthy level of anxiety. The consultants pointed out that if the district did not adopt a systematic approach for choosing approaches and institutionalizing integration initiatives that were working, the "excitement will turn into frustration and the energy will become apathy." The most important directive given to the district's management at that time was to ensure that barriers to the implementation of successful integrating activities were removed or circumvented to maintain staff interest (Rostetter and Hunter, 1989).

A copy of the Executive Summary from the *Report on Progress and Recommendations for the Inclusion of All Students in Regular Education Environments* can be found in Appendix F.

At the end of year two of the five-year implementation plan, progress had been made toward integration, but concerns about the model were being expressed as well. The goal towards integrating was described in ***Actions and Issues, Vol. 1, No. 14,*** dated March 1990, published and distributed by the school district. The newsletter states,

> The program [integration of special services] came about in response to concerns voiced by parents and teachers that students were spending too much time outside the classroom in "pull-out" programs. It was also believed by many that the services children received in these pull-out programs were often duplicated, disjointed, isolated, and/or contradictory; that too many of the same students were served by several different programs working independently of each other and of the classroom teacher. For instance, it was not uncommon for the same student to be pulled out of the classroom for special education, which might include resource and speech, and also for Chapter I, Alaska Native Education, and possibly Bilingual -- creating what many teachers referred to as a "swinging door." This is contrary to growing evidence that children can best be served by providing for their special needs within the context of the regular classroom. As one educator said, "We pull a child out of class while the rest of the class is learning math and then we wonder why he doesn't know how to add!

Inservice training was provided to special services staff (who would be working in classrooms to deliver services to their targeted populations) and special educators. The district's certified and classified special programs staff received training throughout the five years of implementation and were presented the challenge of being integration "leaders" in their buildings. By the third year of the five-year plan, integration activities were occurring in most schools and specialists and teachers began to experiment with ways to integrate services. Special educators were to start slowly to build relationships with regular education teachers and to gauge their attitudes and openness towards integration. Some of the ideas, such as writer's workshop met with success as it could be individualized for all students in a regular education setting.

Five pilot schools were identified during the 1990-91 school year to receive training in integration and collaboration. Regular and special education staff at these five schools were provided specific training in integrated models by an expert from outside of Alaska. Schools were selected and agreed upon by building principals at the beginning of the 1990-91 school year.

**Other Changes Occurred in the District.** Other changes were occurring in the district the year that integration came on line as a major district goal. The newly adopted "whole language" curriculum presented a major challenge for our teaching staff. Most teachers shifted gears from a fairly structured, skill based approach to teaching reading to a more thematic approach to teaching language arts, one which integrated reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Information gathered from teachers in the 1989-90 school year indicated many long hours were spent creating units and developing themes, gathering materials and preparing new lesson plans and activities. This change had a tremendous impact on many elementary classrooms in the district because it was very different from how teachers had taught reading and language in previous years. And because a major curricular area affects all students in a regular classroom, integration of services for special needs students may have seemed the less urgent of the two changes to bring on line. Site based management put more responsibility and accountability onto building principals who were responsible for curriculum and program implementation in their buildings (with less direction from the central office administration). Elementary schools lost their reading specialists as an extra resource person who could work with students (often "gray area" students) and who could assist in the development and implementation of the new language arts program. Some innovations did result from the combining of the language arts and special services program integrations, but overall, the changes were overwhelming to the teaching staff who were left in large part to devise and develop not only lesson plans for the new language arts curriculum, but adaptations to the curriculum for special needs students. There also existed an expectation that relationships would develop between regular and special educators that would promote the success of both these major changes. In very few instances did this actually occur in ways which were successful to the point of being considered a "best practice" which could be expanded to work successfully districtwide.

**Changing Population of School-Age Children.** In addition to changes in curriculum and management, noticeable changes were and are taking place in the overall population of "regular education" students themselves. The numbers of "needy" students teachers see in their classrooms increase every year. Many of these students may not qualify to receive services through special programs, but they are demanding and challenging, often taking disproportionate amounts of teachers' time to deal with their academic, social and emotional needs. As students change, the job of teaching requires the acquisition of new strategies and methods for meeting student needs. The effects of a changing population of "regular" students, along with growth in the numbers of **identified** "special needs" students is a reflection of the changing population of school age children which the public schools must serve (Education Daily, 1991).

## METHODOLOGY

There are several major components to this study, each designed to contribute to the overall scope of the project from different perspectives: principals, teachers, specialists, special programs administrators and staff, and parents. A literature search was conducted on the subject of integrating special needs students. Many articles were read for information on service delivery models, effects of integration on student outcomes and student achievement, teacher reactions to the Regular Education Initiative, parent response to integration, student writings about having a disabled child as part of the group, collaboration, teaming, laws and definitions of terms that apply to our study. Reviews of the district's files on integration, kept at the Office of Instructional Support, were conducted. Publications of staff development opportunities over the past five years were reviewed from files kept at the Curriculum Office.

**Instrument Development.** A list of major issues related to integration was developed and applied to each of the target groups in the study. Survey instruments were developed around these major issues concerning integration, first for building principals and then for program staff, teachers, specialists, and parents. Copies of all instruments used in the study are available at the Program Planning and Evaluation office.

**Student counts from specialists.** Before any conclusions could be drawn regarding the implementation of the integrated service delivery model, we needed to determine the extent to which integration of services for students was actually occurring. In April, 1993, certified staff members in each school building who provide special instructional services to students were contacted and asked to provide information on the number of students they were serving in integrated settings. Specialists were asked the question, "Of the total number of students you serve, how many are served in a **pull-out setting** (student leaves the classroom to receive special instructional services in a different setting), **partially integrated setting** (which means some services are provided in pull-out and some in regular classroom settings) and how many are in a **fully integrated setting** (where the student receives assistance from a specialist in the regular classroom setting and is not pulled out of the classroom for services)?" This data provided the necessary baseline as to the extent of integration occurring, and was also used to identify six schools targeted for site visits.

**Surveys from Special Programs Staff.** Staff members from the Chapter I, Bilingual/Bicultural, and Alaska Native Education programs completed surveys regarding the implementation of integrated services. Surveys were distributed at staff meetings in the spring of the 1992-93 school year. The purpose of targeting this group was to find out the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the integration model through the eyes of the (mostly) classified staff whose role had changed as a result of moving services into classroom settings. The survey addressed attitudes, logistics, and suggestions on ways to improve services through each of these special programs.

**The Principal Component.** All principals completed a questionnaire on integrating special services. Each principal received a packet specific to the schoolwide and districtwide special programs located in their buildings. Results from principal's questionnaires were also used in selecting our six target schools.

**Six "Case Study" Schools.** Three criteria were used to identify our case study schools: the number of students reportedly being served in fully or partially integrated settings, the number of districtwide programs housed at the school, and responses from principal questionnaires. Three of the case study schools reported serving nearly half their special needs students in some type of integrated setting. Three reported comparatively little integration for students.

Interviews were conducted with 62 staff members in the six schools, lasting from 10 minutes to over an hour. A method called "triangulation" was used (which allowed the researchers to obtain information on key issues from a variety of sources) to verify whether key factors for the success of integration were the same across the case study schools, across different special programs, and among individual respondents. This method added to the reliability and validity of the information which was collected, especially in interview formats, because it provided respondents an opportunity to either confirm a previous finding or to provide input which reflected more accurately on their perceptions regarding integration at their particular school. In this way, general concerns were identified for discussion on a districtwide level as opposed to inaccurately drawing conclusions based upon situations unique to a particular school, program, teacher, or child. Whenever possible, the entire set of questions was asked of the participant.

Although the six case study schools are very different in their staff, student demographics, leadership, and climate, similar issues arose regarding integration, including strengths and weaknesses of the model and factors that promote or inhibit successful integration. The reader is cautioned to keep in mind the limitations of "case study" research, in that some findings can be generalized across the district and other findings cannot.

The authors interviewed most, and in some cases all, of the specialists in each school building and at least one classroom teacher at each grade level. At schools where students are in self-contained or intensive resource programs, interviews were completed whenever possible with classroom aides, library assistants, the music and PE teachers. Additionally, interviews were completed with two school counselors, two bilingual staff, one tutor, and a foster grandparent. Brief descriptions of the case study schools can be found in Appendix B.

**The Parent Component.** Parents of students in various special programs were contacted and given an opportunity to respond to a number of questions related to integration in general and their child's placement and progress. A total of 71 parents participated in brief telephone interviews during the month of August, 1993. Names of parents to contact were provided by regular and special educators at the six case study schools during site visits. Principals also provided names of parents to contact.

**Analyzing the Data.** Most of the data collected during the course of the study is qualitative in nature, based upon the opinions of many people as they responded to a series of open-ended questions regarding integration of special services. Where possible, content analyses have been performed which group common responses in order that results may be communicated more clearly. Quantitative data regarding the extent to which integration is occurring for students in various programs is presented in the form of bar charts. Wherever possible, results from objective questions are presented in the form of tables. A statistical software package was used to run frequency distributions, means, and Chi square analyses on quantitative data.

The following discussions summarize the major issues identified by the authors regarding integration in our school district, although in no way are the discussions inclusive of every issue that came out of the study. It is not the intent of this study to pinpoint situations which are so unique to a specific school, program, teacher, or child that they are not representative of overall issues the district should address. Rather, the information presented is a synthesis of the major findings which resulted from principal questionnaires, on-site interviews, surveys from special program staff, classroom observations, and baseline data collected from specialists.

# SECTION II

# PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING INTEGRATION OF SPECIAL SERVICES

## What Principals Say About Integration -- Responses from Principal Questionnaires

All district elementary and secondary principals completed extensive surveys regarding the integration philosophy in general, and the integration of specific programs located within their school. Each principal received a questionnaire regarding integration for each of the special programs located in their building.

Data was collected from special programs staff and special education staff to acquire a count of the actual number of students being served in fully integrated settings, partially integrated, or completely pull-out settings for service delivery. This "baseline" or "census" data was required in order to gauge the extent to which special needs students in various schools, programs, grade levels, etc. were being integrated for services. Results indicate that the perception of principals regarding extent of integration differs, sometimes markedly, from the numbers of students reportedly being integrated according to those who actually serve them. Part of this may be because integration occurs along a spectrum. It does not always mean that a specialist comes into a classroom for an hour a day. Instead, it might mean that curricular adaptations have been made in advance and an aide is present in the classroom. Or it may mean that a specialist takes a small, heterogeneous group of students, and teaches a lesson, modifying the content and/or expectations for each student based upon their individual needs. It is not clear whether these varied definitions were taken into consideration by principals when they answered questions regarding the level and effectiveness of integration for students in various special programs.

Principals provided information concerning general issues regarding integration (such as the need for joint planning time) as well as information which sets one program apart from another, thus delineating issues and implications for integrating services for students with different needs.

**Responses to Survey Questions.** The first question on Part 1 of the survey asked principals, "What does integration of special services mean to you as a building principal as far as how you organize and manage instruction in your building?" The intent of this question was to extract perceived meanings of the concept of integration and find out how principals see their role in implementing the integration model in their building. Responses were varied in nature, but none diverged from the overall concept of providing services to students, as much as possible, in the regular education setting. As one secondary principal stated, "Integration of special services means that students with special needs receive instruction in a least restrictive environment where there is coordination between the regular education teacher and special education teacher to achieve goals for a student's IEP." This description, and most we received, referred to integrating services for those students in special education programs (other than the Gifted-Talented program), rather than expanding the definition to include students in special programs such as Bilingual or Chapter I. The implications of integration for students in each of the special program areas and areas of special education will be discussed later in this report. Appendix D provides the principals' verbatim responses to survey questions.

Question 2 asked principals to list any building level inservices presented to school staff over the past three years pertaining to the integration of special needs students. Topics varied from behavior management, modifying the curriculum, GT instructional methods, and deaf awareness. Some principals listed as many as eight inservices related to serving special learners, while others listed none.

Principals were asked to rate the overall support for integration of special services in their school building on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). Responses from elementary principals ranged from a low of 2 to a high of 10, with a mean of around 6 and slightly lower from secondary school principals (ratings ranged from 0-8, with a mean of about 4.75). The issue of grading came up several times for secondary students, and should be looked at on behalf of secondary teachers who integrate learning disabled students. These ratings should be looked at more closely in order to plan for meeting the needs of the staff members in areas such as training, modeling, and provision of additional resources in those schools where principals perceive low levels of support on the part of their staff. Comments from principals, along with their ratings, appear in Appendix D.

Question 4 asked principals, "If the district had not established a goal to integrate special needs and special program students into regular classroom settings, would you integrate?" This question more than any other gets at the philosophical stance held by our building administrators and at the extent to which they support integration for special needs students. After five years of gradual phase-in and experimentation with integrated settings, principals have an idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the integration model and are no longer operating from the point of view of "it sounds like a good idea." A majority of principals reported that they would have begun to integrate services whether the district had established the goal to do so or not. But the extent to which services can be integrated is dependent on certain factors, as summarized in this statement by one elementary principal who has intensive resource programs in the building:

> "As close to 100% as possible, and as much as staff allows based on **PTR, planning time, and the needs of the children**. Not all children are able to be integrated 100% of the time, but ALL children should be integrated some of the time."

Concerning learning disabled and speech/language students, one principal wrote:

> "For some, all the time. For most, some of the time. For a few, no. There is value in staying with peers and avoiding the stigma of "dummy." However, I have seen a combination of pull-out and integration provide the best of both worlds. This takes mutual planning time and so cannot occur in all classrooms."

Another principal wrote:

> "It depends on the concentration of special needs students in a classroom and grade level, the student load for the resource teachers and the spread of classes involved as well as individual student needs."

Principals at the secondary level agree that, in general, educational programs can be integrated for 75% of special needs students or more. As one secondary principal wrote,

> "This is not a special education world. Students need to learn strategies to be successful in a mainstreamed environment."

Another wrote,

> "Some kids (25%) need the individual daily attention a pull-out provides, but not all kids, not all subjects."

Again, verbatim responses appear in Appendix D.

Principals were asked to comment on the district's leadership role in guiding the process that leads to successful integration (Question 5). The intent of this question was to find out if principals felt they had received the support they needed to implement an integrated model at their school building. It should be noted that at the time of the survey, only 9 of our 28 principals had been at their current school for the full five year time period in which the integration model was being implemented. Nearly half of the building administrative staff had been in their buildings for two years or less. Changes that occur with site based managers affect efforts of the staff to implement new models, in that often they look to their principal to provide support and advocacy to get what they need to do the job. Additionally, it takes time to become familiar with a new school environment (staff, students, and parents) and to build the necessary rapport in order to become an effective instructional leader.

Analyses of responses from principals indicate that the long-term principals who learned about the integration goal right from the start feel the district provided more guidance and support than those principals new to a building. Some principals wrote that they always felt the district was strongly committed to the concept of integration, but did not follow through in the practical application of the integrated model, such as providing adequate training (especially to regular education), working out joint planning time, or hiring more aides to work in classrooms with disabled students. Still, most principals think we are moving in the right direction. Comments from principals regarding the district's leadership role can be found in Appendix D.

Principals were given the opportunity to describe future plans they have for educating special needs students. Some say they will continue what they did during the 1992-93 school year. Others plan to expand integrated services to students and promote team teaching opportunities. New developments to watch will be at Ladd Elementary, which will be in year one of their LIFT program (an adaptation of the Issaquah model described in more detail in the section on integrating learning disabled students) and Arctic Light, which will begin a planning year towards implementation of the Issaquah model. Comments regarding future plans and general comments regarding the integration model can be found in Appendix D.

**Integrating services for students in specific needs categories.** For reporting purposes, content analyses from Part 2 of the questionnaires, (which asks principals for information regarding integration of students who are enrolled in **specific programs** such as speech/language or Chapter I), have been completed and are presented in the tables on the following pages. The individual program surveys provided information which can identify specific factors involved in integrating students with different needs.

Principals identified particular strengths of the integration model and key factors that must be in place in order for integration to work. The most frequently mentioned **strengths** of the integration model were: **students are able to remain in their classroom** and **an increased cohesiveness in the instructional program for special needs students** (Table 4). **Key factors** for the overall success of the integration model were identified as **willingness on the part of teachers and special educators, planning time and collaboration, and positive working relationships** (Table 5). Similarities and differences in factors which promote the success of integration depend on the needs of students. For example, key factors needed to successfully integrate mentally disabled students are not the same as the factors needed to integrate the GT program.

Principals also named what they perceive to be primary weaknesses with integration and the key factors which inhibit successful integration. Summaries of responses appear in Tables 6 and 7. The most frequently mentioned weaknesses of the model were: **the need for individual, one on one instruction, lack of staff, and lack of planning time.**

Principals were asked to list the most frequently heard concerns from both regular and special educators. Content analyses appear in Tables 8 and 9, by each special program. Concerns voiced most frequently by classroom teachers are: **lack of planning time, effectiveness of the model in meeting student needs, and the need for additional training.** Concerns heard most frequently from special educators are: **lack of planning time, heavy case load of students, scheduling.**

### Table 4

### Primary Strengths of the Integration Model by Special Education Program<br>Responses from Building Principals, May 1993

| Categories of responses from principals | LD<br>(28) | CD<br>(27) | GT<br>(26) | MR<br>(8) | EI<br>(12) | OTH<br>(7) | CH 1<br>(9) | BIL<br>(25) | ANE<br>(18) | DEAF<br>(2) | TOTAL<br>(162) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students are able to remain in the classroom with their peers and not be singled out/reduction of stigma | 89%<br>(25) | 44%<br>(12) | 15%<br>(4) | 0 | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 56%<br>(5) | 36%<br>(9) | 50%<br>(9) | 0 | 41%<br>(66) |
| There is less time lost in transition from the classroom to another location for services/less disruptive than students coming and going | 7%<br>(2) | 4%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 4%<br>(7) |
| Exposure to positive role models (academic, communicative, and behavioral) | 25%<br>(7) | 30%<br>(8) | 8%<br>(2) | 25%<br>(6) | 67%<br>(8) | 43%<br>(3) | 11%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 23%<br>(37) |
| All students grow to understand individual/cultural differences | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 38%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16%<br>(4) | 22%<br>(4) | 50%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(13) |
| Appropriate language models | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 13%<br>(1) | 0 | 14%<br>(1) | 0 | 24%<br>(6) | 0 | 0 | 6%<br>(9) |
| Improved communication with teachers | 4%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 3%<br>(5) |
| Higher expectations of special students/more like real world | 18%<br>(5) | 0 | 0 | 38%<br>(3) | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6%<br>(10) |
| Cohesiveness of program for the student/ less fragmented instruction/shared goals | 39%<br>(11) | 37%<br>(10) | 4%<br>(1) | 13%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(1) | 0 | 22%<br>(2) | 8%<br>(2) | 17%<br>(3) | 50%<br>(1) | 20%<br>(32) |
| Characteristics of staff members involved | 0 | 7%<br>(2) | 4%<br>(1) | 13%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(1) | 14%<br>(1) | 11%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 6%<br>(1) | 50%<br>(1) | 6%<br>(10) |
| All students can benefit from extra services and instruction | 14%<br>(4) | 15%<br>(4) | 35%<br>(9) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22%<br>(2) | 12%<br>(3) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 15%<br>(24) |
| Staff/students exposed to new strategies, activities, techniques | 11%<br>(3) | 4%<br>(1) | 15%<br>(4) | 0 | 8%<br>(1) | 29%<br>(2) | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 7%<br>(12) |
| Special student benefits from social interactions | 0 | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 63%<br>(5) | 8%<br>(1) | 29%<br>(2) | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 7%<br>(11) |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22%<br>(2) | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 3%<br>(5) |

### Table 5
### Key Factors for the Success of the Integration Model by Special Program
### Responses from Building Principals, May 1993

| Categories of Responses from Principals | LD (28) | CD (27) | GT (26) | MR (8) | EI (12) | OTH (7) | CHI (9) | BIL (25) | ANE (18) | DEAF (2) | TOTAL (162) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Willingness on the part of teachers, including willingness to modify the curriculum | 64% (18) | 41% (11) | 46% (12) | 38% (3) | 33% (4) | 29% (2) | 33% (3) | 28% (7) | 11% (2) | 0 | 38% (62) |
| Planning time/collaboration | 46% (13) | 56% (15) | 23% (6) | 0 | 33% (4) | 14% (1) | 78% (7) | 32% (8) | 17% (3) | 0 | 35% (57) |
| Positive working relationships/teaching styles/personalities/flexibility | 46% (13) | 26% (7) | 35% (9) | 13% (1) | 33% (4) | 14% (1) | 44% (4) | 40% (10) | 44% (8) | 0 | 35% (57) |
| Shared philosophies/belief systems/attitudes | 11% (3) | 15% (4) | 8% (2) | 13% (1) | 8% (1) | 0 | 22% (2) | 8% (2) | 6% (1) | 0 | 10% (16) |
| Consideration of student needs | 7% (2) | 15% (4) | 12% (3) | 0 | 8% (1) | 14% (1) | 0 | 4% (1) | 0 | 0 | 8% (12) |
| Consistency and quality of staff members | 11% (3) | 4% (1) | 4% (1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4% (1) | 22% (4) | 50% (1) | 7% (11) |
| Staff development/training in delivery models and ways to serve special learners | 18% (5) | 4% (1) | 15% (4) | 13% (1) | 17% (2) | 14% (1) | 0 | 8% (2) | 11% (2) | 0 | 11% (18) |
| Parent receptivity to integrated services | 4% (1) | 4% (1) | 15% (4) | 13% (1) | 8% (1) | 0 | 0 | 4% (1) | 0 | 0 | 6% (9) |
| Student motivation toward goals | 11% (3) | 4% (1) | 15% (4) | 0 | 17% (2) | 0 | 0 | 4% (1) | 0 | 0 | 7% (11) |
| Interactions of regular education students with special education students | 7% (2) | 11% (3) | 8% (2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |  | 4% (7) |
| Level of knowledge/skills/expertise/staff development re: special students | 36% (10) | 4% (1) | 19% (5) | 26% (2) | 25% (3) | 14% (1) | 0 | 12% (3) | 17% (3) | 50% (1) | 18% (29) |
| Clear, realistic objectives along with appropriate direct instructional methods | 7% (2) | 4% (1) | 0 | 50% (4) | 17% (2) | 0 | 0 | 4% (1) | 0 |  | 6% (10) |
| Aide support | 4% (1) | 4% (1) | 0 | 50% (4) | 17% (2) | 0 | 0 | 4% (1) | 0 | 50% (1) | 6% (10) |
| Flexible scheduling | 7% (2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11% (1) | 4% (1) | 6% (1) | 0 | 3% (5) |

## Table 6
## Primary Weaknesses of the Integration Model by Special Education Program
## Responses from Building Principals, May 1993

| Categories of Responses from Principals | LD (28) | CD (27) | GT (26) | MR (8) | EI (12) | OTH (7) | CH 1 (9) | BIL (25) | ANE (18) | DEAF (2) | TOTAL (162) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lack of time to plan, collaborate, share information about child and needs | 32%<br>(9) | 22%<br>(6) | 8%<br>(2) | 25%<br>(2) | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 33%<br>(3) | 12%<br>(3) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 17%<br>(28) |
| Regular education teachers need more training, knowledge, and understanding of special needs children | 18%<br>(5) | 7%<br>(2) | 8%<br>(2) | 38%<br>(3) | 33%<br>(4) | 0 | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 11%<br>(17) |
| Some students will be more successful with individual instruction/they need to be pulled out/integration not appropriate/ time on task impacted/students are too easily distracted in the classroom | 43%<br>(12) | 52%<br>(14) | 19%<br>(5) | 13%<br>(1) | 17%<br>(2) | 14%<br>(1) | 22%<br>(2) | 24%<br>(6) | 17%<br>(3) | 0 | 28%<br>(46) |
| Absence of an "integrating philosophy" or belief that integration is the right thing to do/unwilling to try/teachers (both reg ed and spec ed) who insist on pull-out | 21%<br>(6) | 30%<br>(8) | 12%<br>(3) | 0 | 25%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 14%<br>(22) |
| Our schools are understaffed to have effective integrated programs/need more staff/specialists spread too thin | 39%<br>(11) | 11%<br>(3) | 12%<br>(3) | 13%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(1) | 0 | 11%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(2) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 15%<br>(24) |
| Lack of support by parents and students/ integration creates a stigma | 7%<br>(2) | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 25%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 6%<br>(10) |
| Lack of support for the classroom teacher/ classroom teacher overwhelmed/class sizes are already large (PTR) | 7%<br>(2) | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 38%<br>(3) | 33%<br>(4) | 0 | 11%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 9%<br>(14) |
| Inability to collaborate effectively/ personalities that don't mesh well | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 8%<br>(1) | 14%<br>(1) | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 4%<br>(6) |
| For itinerants and 1/2 time staff, not enough time spent in buildings or classrooms to be effective | 4%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 15%<br>(4) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 5%<br>(8) |

Table 7
Key Factors that Inhibit Successful Integration, by Special Education Program
Responses from Building Principals, May 1993

| Categories of Responses from Principals | LD (28) | CD (27) | GT (26) | MR (8) | EI (12) | OTH (7) | CH 1 (9) | BIL (25) | ANE (18) | DEAF (2) | TOTAL (162) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lack of planning time/collaboration/time to communicate along with other duties/IEP meetings/paperwork | 32%<br>(9) | 19%<br>(5) | 42%<br>(5) | 13%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 11%<br>(1) | 16%<br>(4) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 17%<br>(27) |
| Teachers who do not or will not make modifications in assignments, approach, or expectations of special students | 25%<br>(7) | 0 | 25%<br>(3) | 25%<br>(2) | 17%<br>(2) | 29%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10%<br>(16) |
| Too many needy students in too many classes to be served by too few people/ lack of staffing and/or aide support | 29%<br>(8) | 41%<br>(11) | 25%<br>(3) | 13%<br>(1) | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 22%<br>(2) | 8%<br>(2) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 17%<br>(31) |
| Lack of ability to team effectively/level of staff reliability/working relationships | 18%<br>(5) | 7%<br>(2) | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11%<br>(1) | 12%<br>(3) | 17%<br>(3) | 0 | 10%<br>(16) |
| High PTR in regular classroom/ space limitations in classrooms/distractions in regular classrooms | 21%<br>(6) | 7%<br>(2) | 8%<br>(1) | 13%<br>(1) | 25%<br>(3) | 0 | 11%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 9%<br>(15) |
| Lack of regular education knowledge, training, and understanding of student needs | 14%<br>(4) | 15%<br>(4) | 42%<br>(5) | 13%<br>(1) | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 20%<br>(5) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 14%<br>(22) |
| Not enough time to or ability to accomplish goals in reg education setting or to meet specific student needs | 32%<br>(9) | 30%<br>(8) | 67%<br>(8) | 25%<br>(2) | 8%<br>(1) | 29%<br>(2) | 33%<br>(3) | 44%<br>(11) | 28%<br>(5) | 0 | 30%<br>(49) |
| The level of receptivity and/or resistance to idea of integration/no desire to change | 29%<br>(8) | 19%<br>(5) | 42%<br>(5) | 25%<br>(2) | 33%<br>(4) | 14%<br>(1) | 11%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(2) | 28%<br>(5) | 0 | 20%<br>(33) |
| Scheduling | 7%<br>(2) | 11%<br>(3) | 0 | 13%<br>(1) | 0 | 14%<br>(1) | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 6%<br>(10) |
| Parents who request pull-out services | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 33%<br>(4) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50%<br>(1) | 4%<br>(6) |
| Lack of support from central office/lack of successful models of integration for various types of students/materials | 7%<br>(2) | 7%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3%<br>(4) |

### Table 8
### Concerns Expressed to Principals by Regular Education Teachers Regarding Integration, by Program
### Responses from Building Principals, May 1993

| Top ten concerns principals hear from the regular education teachers in their buildings | LD (28) | CD (27) | GT (26) | MR (8) | EI (12) | OTH (7) | CH 1 (9) | BIL (25) | ANE (18) | DEAF (2) | TOTAL (162) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Need more time to work on lessons together/planning time | 32% (9) | 26% (7) | 4% (1) | 13% (1) | 0 | 0 | 33% (3) | 8% (2) | 17% (3) | 0 | 16% (2)6 |
| Integration does not seem to be meeting student needs | 21% (6) | 15% (4) | 12% (3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22% (2) | 12% (3) | 17% (3) | 0 | 13% (21) |
| We need more training/knowledge of disabilities/ways to teach special students | 18% (5) | 15% (4) | 8% (2) | 38% (3) | 50% (6) | 0 | 0 | 4% (1) | 11% (2) | 0 | 14% (23) |
| We need the specialist during our prime times/scheduling is an issue | 7% (2) | 15% (4) | 8% (2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12% (3) | 0 | 0 | 7% (11) |
| We need more staff to monitor student progress in the classroom, including aide support | 4% (1) | 0 | 8% (2) | 38% (3) | 17% (2) | 14% (1) | 0 | 4% (1) | 0 | 0 | 6% (10) |
| Special services staff doesn't spend enough time in the classroom to make a difference | 0 | 11% (3) | 4% (1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11% (1) | 20% (5) | 6% (1) | 0 | 7% (11) |
| We're unsure of our role in team teaching special students/lack of comfort with team teaching/staff conflicts | 7% (2) | 4% (1) | 4% (1) | 13% (1) | 0 | 0 | 11% (1) | 4% (1) | 11% (2) | 0 | 6% (9) |
| We're not getting enough help or support from special services staff in integrating our students (including knowledge of the student and their needs) | 21% (6) | 7% (2) | 0 | 0 | 42% (5) | 29% (2) | 0 | 4% (1) | 6% (1) | 0 | 11% (17) |
| Don't pull them out | 7% (2) | 0 | 12% (3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3% (5) |
| We need better consistency and reliability regarding the integration of special programs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11% (1) | 4% (1) | 22% (4) | 0 | 4% (6) |

## Table 9
## Concerns Expressed to Principals by Special Services Staff Regarding Integration, by Program
## Responses from Building Principals, May 1993

| Top ten concerns principals hear from special programs staff in their buildings | LD (28) | CD (27) | GT (26) | MR (8) | EI (12) | OTH (7) | CH 1 (9) | BIL (25) | ANE (18) | DEAF (2) | TOTAL (162) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| It's hard to focus on the needs of the special learners/meet their needs/address the specific IEP goals | 36%<br>(10) | 15%<br>(4) | 12%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 14%<br>(1) | 22%<br>(2) | 12%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 14%<br>(23) |
| I have too many classrooms and teachers to work with and schedule/can't be everywhere at once/spread too thin | 43%<br>(12) | 7%<br>(2) | 27%<br>(7) | 0 | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 16%<br>(26) |
| There is no time to collaborate/plan/communicate | 57%<br>(16) | 22%<br>(6) | 4%<br>(1) | 13%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(1) | 14%<br>(1) | 44%<br>(4) | 12%<br>(3) | 11%<br>(2) | 50%<br>(1) | 22%<br>(36) |
| Too heavy of caseload/too many special students to serve | 29%<br>(8) | 22%<br>(6) | 19%<br>(5) | 13%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 22%<br>(2) | 20%<br>(5) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 18%<br>(29) |
| Finding appropriate classroom placements for students | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50%<br>(4) | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 4%<br>(7) |
| We are understaffed to be able to integrate effectively | 7%<br>(2) | 11%<br>(3) | 4%<br>(1) | 13%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 6%<br>(9) |
| Regular ed teachers don't alter what they are doing to meet the needs of special students | 18%<br>(5) | 7%<br>(2) | 4%<br>(1) | 13%<br>(1) | 8%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6%<br>(10) |
| We are treated like an aide in the classroom instead of a partner in the educational process | 14%<br>(4) | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 8%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 12%<br>(3) | 22%<br>(4) | 0 | 8%<br>(13) |
| There are not enough regular education teachers who want to integrate/teacher attitudes | 11%<br>(3) | 7%<br>(2) | 4%<br>(1) | 0 | 17%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 4%<br>(1) | 11%<br>(2) | 0 | 7%<br>(11) |
| Too much paperwork taking time away from working with students | 11%<br>(3) | 0 | 8%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6%<br>(1) | 0 | 4%<br>(6) |

Table 10 presents responses from principals regarding the perceived effect of integration on student progress for special needs students. Two thirds of building principals indicated they believe integration has a positive effect for special needs students in nearly every program. The only exception appears to be with students in the gifted-talented program. Several building principals perceive integration as having a negative effect on special needs students in particular programs: one principal felt there were negative effects from integrating learning disabled students and Chapter I students, three principals report negative effects for students when integrated for gifted-talented services, and two principals believe there are negative effects for bilingual students. The percent of principals who responded that they did not know if the effect of integration on special learners was positive or negative varied depending on which program they were considering.

Principals were also asked if they believe integrating services for special learners affects student progress for regular education students. Results appear in Table 11. About 59% of principals believe the effects of integrating services for special needs students affects regular education students in a positive way, and another 15% say they believe there is no apparent effect on regular education students. Again, responses depended upon which special program was under consideration. Principals with programs for mentally retarded students strongly believe that integration benefits regular students. About one third of principals with EI programs in their schools feel that integration negatively effects student progress for regular education students. For some programs, principals simply did not know what the effect on regular education students might be.

The survey asked principals to indicate the type of feedback they have generally received from parents of special learners regarding integration. Results in Table 12 indicate that for many programs, principals simply have not received feedback from parents. Many more positive comments have been received from parents of special learners than negative comments, with the exception of parents of GT students, where 27% of principals report negative comments about integration of services. According to building principals, very little feedback has been received from parents of regular education students regarding integrated services for special learners (Table 13). Again, the exception is for emotionally impaired students placed in regular classrooms.

Table 10

Effect of Integration on Progress of Special Learners, by Special Program
Responses from Principal Questionnaires
May, 1993

**Question 7: What effect has integration had on student progress for students with special needs?**

| Name of Program | Positive Effect | No Apparent Effect | Negative Effect | Both Positive and Negative Effects | Don't Know/ No Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning Disabled (N=28) | 75% (21) | 0 | 3.6% (1) | 14.3% (4) | 7.1% (2) |
| Communication Disabled (N=27) | 77.8% (21) | 0 | 0 | 3.7% (1) | 18.5% (5) |
| Gifted-Talented (N=26) | 34.6% (9) | 23.1% (6) | 11.5% (3) | 3.8% (1) | 26.9% (7) |
| Mentally Retarded (N=8) | 100% (8) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Emotionally Impaired (N=12) | 83.3% (10) | 0 | 0 | 8.3% (1) | 8.3% (1) |
| Deaf (N=2) | 50% (1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50% (1) |
| Other Intensive (N=7) | 57.1% (4) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 42.9% (3) |
| Chapter I (N=9) | 55.6% (5) | 0 | 11.1% (1) | 0 | 33.3% (3) |
| Bilingual (N=25) | 64.0% (16) | 4% (1) | 8.0% (2) | 0 | 24.0% (6) |
| Alaska Native Ed (N=18) | 66.7% (12) | 22.2% (4) | 0 | 0 | 11.1% (2) |
| Migrant Ed (N=5) | 40% (2) | 40% (2) | 0 | 0 | 20% (1) |
| Total | 65.5% (110) | 7.7% (13) | 4.2% (7) | 4.2% (7) | 18.5% (31) |

### Table 11

### Effect of Integration on Progress of Regular Students, by Special Program
Responses from Principal Questionnaires
May, 1993

**Question 8: What effect has integration had on student progress for regular education students who have special learners integrated into regular classroom settings for services?**

| Name of Program | Positive Effect | No Apparent Effect | Negative Effect | Both Positive and Negative Effects | Don't Know/ No Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning Disabled<br>(N=28) | 71.4%<br>(20) | 14.3%<br>(4) | 0 | 3.6%<br>(1) | 10.7%<br>(3) |
| Communication Disabled<br>(N=27) | 59.3%<br>(16) | 22.2%<br>(6) | 0 | 0 | 18.5%<br>(5) |
| Gifted-Talented<br>(N=26) | 53.8%<br>(14) | 11.5%<br>(3) | 3.8%<br>(1) | 3.8%<br>(1) | 26.9%<br>(7) |
| Mentally Retarded<br>(N=9) | 88.9%<br>(8) | 0 | 0 | 11.1%<br>(1) | 0 |
| Emotionally Impaired<br>(N=12) | 25.0%<br>(3) | 8.3%<br>(1) | 33.3%<br>(4) | 8.3%<br>(1) | 25.0%<br>(3) |
| Deaf<br>(N=2) | 50%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50%<br>(1) |
| Other Intensive<br>(N=7) | 42.9%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 57.1%<br>(4) |
| Chapter I<br>(N=9) | 55.6%<br>(5) | 11.1%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 33.3%<br>(3) |
| Bilingual<br>(N=25) | 64.0%<br>(16) | 16.0%<br>(4) | 0 | 0 | 20.0%<br>(5) |
| Alaska Native Ed<br>(N=18) | 66.7%<br>(12) | 16.7%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 16.7%<br>(3) |
| Migrant Ed<br>(N=5) | 20%<br>(1) | 60%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 20%<br>(1) |
| Total | 58.9%<br>(99) | 14.9%<br>(25) | 3.0%<br>(5) | 2.4%<br>(4) | 20.8%<br>(35) |

## Table 12

## Feedback on Integration from Parents of Special Learners, by Special Program
Responses from Principal Questionnaires
May, 1993

**Question 9: Please indicate the type of feedback you have generally received from parents of special learners regarding integration.**

| Name of Program | Generally positive comments | Generally negative comments | Both positive and negative comments | Have not received comments/ don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning Disabled<br>(N=28) | 64.3%<br>(18) | 7.1%<br>(2) | 10.7%<br>(3) | 17.9%<br>(5) |
| Communication Disabled<br>(N=27) | 33.3%<br>(9) | 0 | 0 | 66.7%<br>(18) |
| Gifted-Talented<br>(N=26) | 23.1%<br>(6) | 26.9%<br>(7) | 0 | 50.0%<br>(13) |
| Mentally Retarded<br>(N=9) | 55.6%<br>(5) | 0 | 11.1%<br>(1) | 33.3%<br>(3) |
| Emotionally Impaired<br>(N=12) | 33.3%<br>(4) | 16.7%<br>(2) | 0 | 50.0%<br>(6) |
| Deaf<br>(N=2) | 100%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 50%<br>(1) |
| Other Intensive<br>(N=7) | 42.9%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 57.2%<br>(4) |
| Chapter I<br>(N=9) | 33.3%<br>(4) | 16.7%<br>(2) | 0 | 50.0%<br>(6) |
| Bilingual<br>(N=25) | 32.0%<br>(8) | 4.0%<br>(1) | 0 | 64.0%<br>(16) |
| Alaska Native Ed<br>(N=18) | 27.8%<br>(5) | 5.6%<br>(1) | 5.6%<br>(1) | 61.2%<br>(11) |
| Migrant Ed<br>(N=5) | 20%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 80%<br>(4) |
| Total | 38.1%<br>(64) | 7.7%<br>(13) | 3.0%<br>(5) | 51.2%<br>(86) |

Table 13

Feedback on Integration from Parents of Regular Education Students, by Special Program
Responses from Principal Questionnaires
May, 1993

**Question 10: Please indicate the type of feedback you have generally received from parents of regular education regarding the integration of special learners.**

| Name of Program | Generally positive comments | Generally negative comments | Both positive and negative comments | Have not received comments/ don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning Disabled<br>(N=28) | 7.1%<br>(2) | 7.1%<br>(2) | 7.1%<br>(2) | 78.6%<br>(22) |
| Communication Disabled<br>(N=27) | 14.8%<br>(4) | 0 | 3.7%<br>(1) | 81.5%<br>(22) |
| Gifted-Talented<br>(N=26) | 19.2%<br>(5) | 3.8%<br>(1) | 7.7%<br>(2) | 69.2%<br>(18) |
| Mentally Retarded<br>(N=9) | 33.3%<br>(3) | 0 | 0 | 66.7%<br>(6) |
| Emotionally Impaired<br>(N=12) | 8.3%<br>(1) | 33.3%<br>(4) | 0 | 58.3%<br>(7) |
| Deaf<br>(N=2) | 50%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 50%<br>(1) |
| Other Intensive<br>(N=7) | 28.6%<br>(2) | 0 | 0 | 71.4%<br>(5) |
| Chapter I<br>(N=9) | 11.1%<br>(1) | 0 | 0 | 88.9%<br>(8) |
| Bilingual<br>(N=25) | 24.0%<br>(6) | 4.0%<br>(1) | 0 | 72.0%<br>(18) |
| Alaska Native Ed<br>(N=18) | 22.2%<br>(4) | 0 | 0 | 88.9%<br>(14) |
| Migrant Ed<br>(N=5) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100%<br>(5) |
| Total | 17.3%<br>(29) | 4.2%<br>(7) | 3.0%<br>(5) | 71.4%<br>(127) |

In general, it appears that principals were more likely to over-rate the extent to which integration was occurring, both for special education students and students in other special programs. Data gathered from special educators and special programs staff (such as Chapter I and Bilingual) indicate that more students are being pulled out for services than are reflected in percentages from principal questionnaires. This data is presented within the discussion of each special services program in the following sections.

# SECTION III

# INTEGRATING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

## INTEGRATING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Integrating students who qualify to receive special education instruction is the area in which integration has the most complex implications for our regular classrooms. During the 1992-93 school year, nearly 3,000 students were served in special education programs in 14 "primary" exceptionality areas. This includes over 700 students in the gifted-talented program. Many students qualify to receive services in more than one area of exceptionality. In addition to receiving assistance for their primary area of exceptionality, many students receive other related support services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy or special vocational education.

Each area of special education serves a population of students with a wide range of needs, and thus, the factors surrounding successful integration are also varied. The integration of services for students in each major area of exceptionality will be discussed later in this report.

### Integrating Services for Learning Disabled Students

In our school district and across the nation, there is a growing number of students identified as having a learning disability. In Fairbanks, the number of identified LD (learning disabled) students has increased 22.5% in five years while districtwide enrollment has increased by 13.4%.

The district's *Special Education Procedures Manual, March, 1992* contains the following federal definition of the term learning disabled:

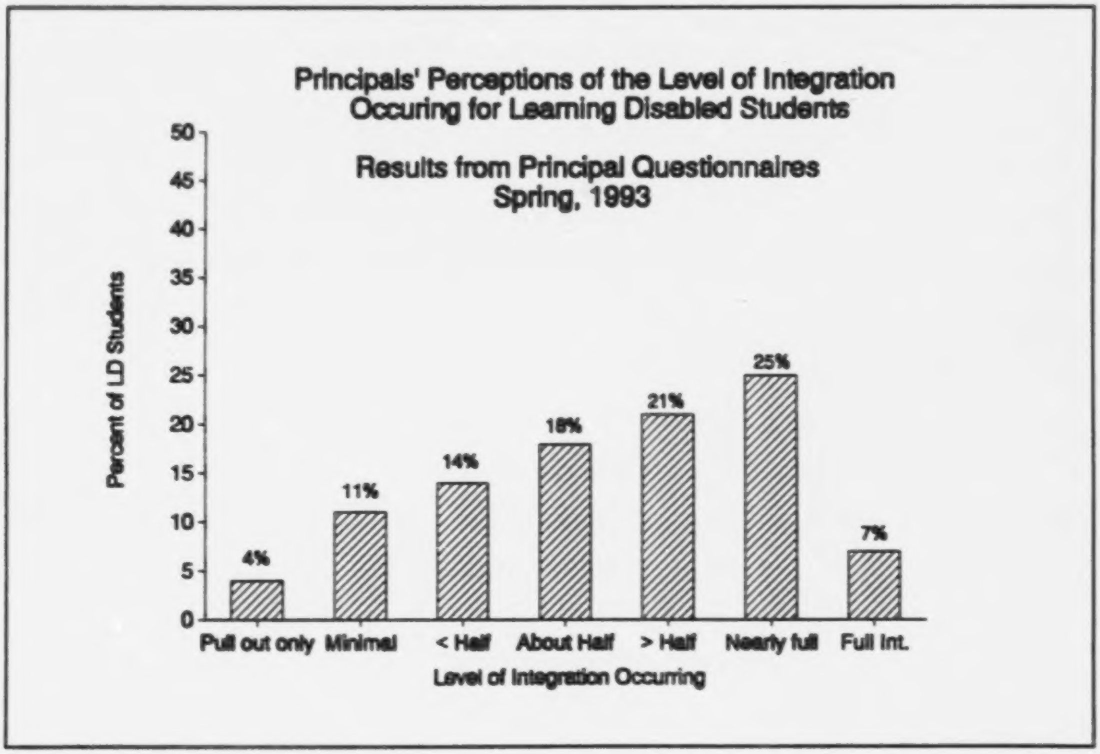
> "Learning disabled" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The condition is exhibited by a severe discrepancy between ability and achievement levels and adversely affects educational performance. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

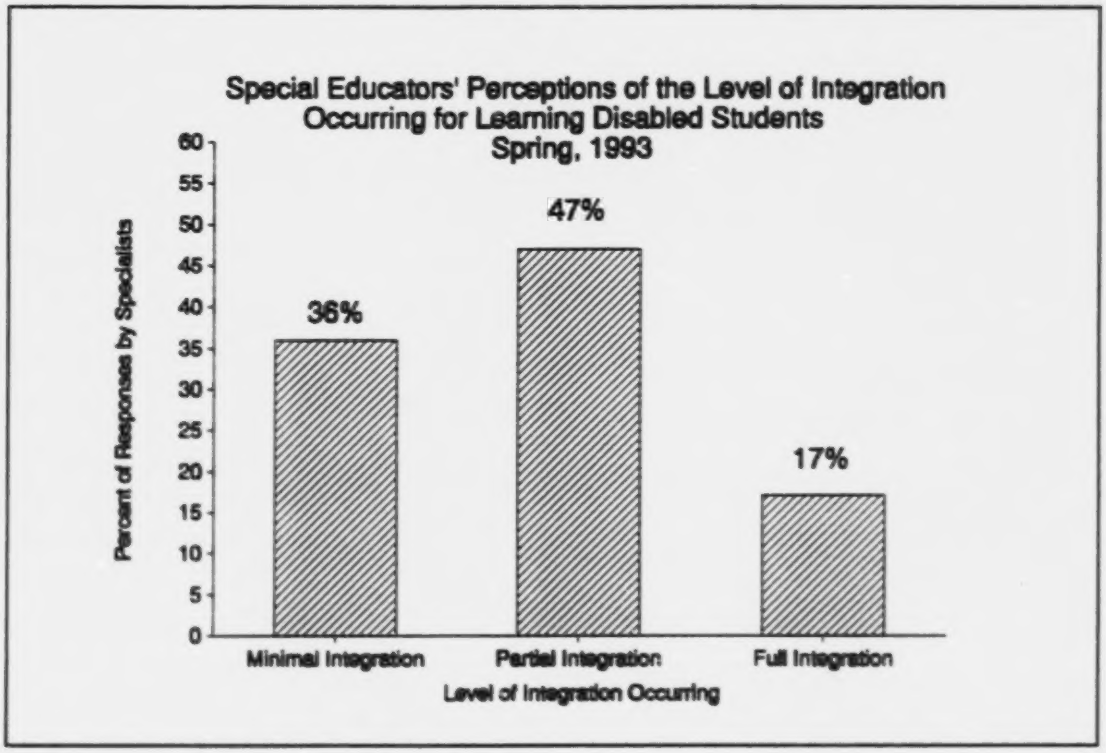
**Assessments.** One requirement of the law is to administer appropriate assessments to students to confirm that a discrepancy exists between a student's achievement and ability. Many times our FAS/FAE and ADD or ADHD children fall into the category of learning disabled because of problems they have in processing information or attending to a task. Learning disabilities can range from very mild to very severe, and these children have quite different needs. The severity of the learning disability must be determined to properly place and teach the students. Some students with a mild disability need supportive help and minor modifications to classroom curriculum. Others are so far below grade level that they may need other types of help. Placement decisions should be made based upon individual student needs and where those needs can best be met.

**Placements.** For nearly thirty years, service delivery for most learning disabled students was the resource room. In fact, the earliest LD programs which were developed in the late 60's through the 70's were mostly for students at the elementary level, and they followed the traditional delivery system at that time: self-contained classes. Resource room programs were introduced which pulled students from regular classrooms only for instruction in their particular deficit area(s) (Lerner, 1989). Integration for learning disabled students looks at providing options for keeping the student in the regular classroom so as to comply more closely to the "least restrictive environment" section of the law which states to parents that their child has the right to be educated to the extent appropriate with children who are not disabled. The law describes the rights of parents to ensure their child's opportunities to be educated in a regular classroom unless the nature or severity of the disability is such that he or she cannot receive a satisfactory education in that setting with the use of additional aids and services. Today, the vast majority of LD students are in regular classrooms, assigned to a regular classroom teacher, unless they are severely disabled and placed in self-contained LD resource programs.

The amount of time that students receive services depends on their specific disability and whether they need to be served in one or more areas, such as reading, written language, or mathematics. Integration of services refers NOT to finding ways to **put** them into a regular classroom (they are already there), but ways to effectively **keep** them in a regular classroom rather than having them leave for the resource room. Current staffing is one resource teacher for 30 to 35 learning disabled students. Aide support is considered by the program manager when caseloads reach about 30. Again, the decision to add more staff is based upon the range and intensity of the needs of the students and district resources.

**Extent of Integration Occurring.** Principals were asked to estimate the amount of integration occurring for learning disabled students in their schools. The bar chart below shows principal responses regarding the perceived level of integration occurring for students in resource programs for a learning disability. Principals report that less than 5% of students are exclusively pulled out of the classroom for services. The majority of principals report that more than half of the LD population in their schools receive between 25% and 75% of instruction in some form of integrated setting. As explained before, integration can occur in many different ways, such as having a special educator come into the classroom, or reverse mainstreaming where students bring regular education students from the classroom to the resource room. Some school staff refer to "integrating the curriculum", which means that planning and collaboration occur such that





modifications are made to the regular class curriculum prior to the instructional delivery by a classroom teacher. Some students still go to the resource room, but work on goals using the same content that is being covered in the regular classroom.

Additionally, each resource teacher in the district was contacted and asked for a count of how many students were being served in "primarily pull-out" settings, "partially integrated", settings or "fully integrated" settings. The bar chart shown above represents responses from about 80% of the district's resource staff for learning disabled students. Specialists report more resource students are being served in pull-out or minimally integrated settings than principals (36% specialists versus 15% principals), and a higher number who are "fully integrated" (17% specialists, 7% principals). The discrepancy may be caused in part to estimations on the part of principals rather than specific student counts, or in varying interpretations of the term "integrated."

Interviews with classroom teachers and resource teachers at our six target schools indicate strengths regarding integration for learning disabled students. Primary strengths are:

- Students feel more a part of the class and don't miss out on classroom learning activities. Educators say that the transition between classroom to resource room to classroom is particularly difficult for LD students as far as picking up on what is happening in the classroom. This has become increasingly important as more teachers carry similar themes through various subject areas;

- Students are exposed to positive role models and have opportunities to learn from their peers;

- Often there are higher expectations of the student and less "resource dependency" that is allowed to develop which may manifest itself in a lower level of motivation;

- Shared goals for the student means less fragmentation of instruction and more meaningful school experiences which can hopefully lead to more school success. Everyone pulls together on behalf of the child rather than several people doing different programs.

According to principals and teachers who participated in our study, there are several key factors which must be in place if benefits to integration are to be realized. These are:

- **planning time** for regular education teachers and specialists;

- **willingness to try** on the part of both classroom teacher and resource teacher to try integration, including shared beliefs and philosophies;

- **positive working relationships** with those who are teaming (largely personality characteristics and compatible teaching styles are at play here);

- **flexibility** in scheduling and instructional delivery;

- **adequate training** to ensure the level of knowledge, skill, and expertise on the part of those who are working with special needs students.

Respondents were also asked to describe any weaknesses with the integration model. The main weaknesses are listed below:

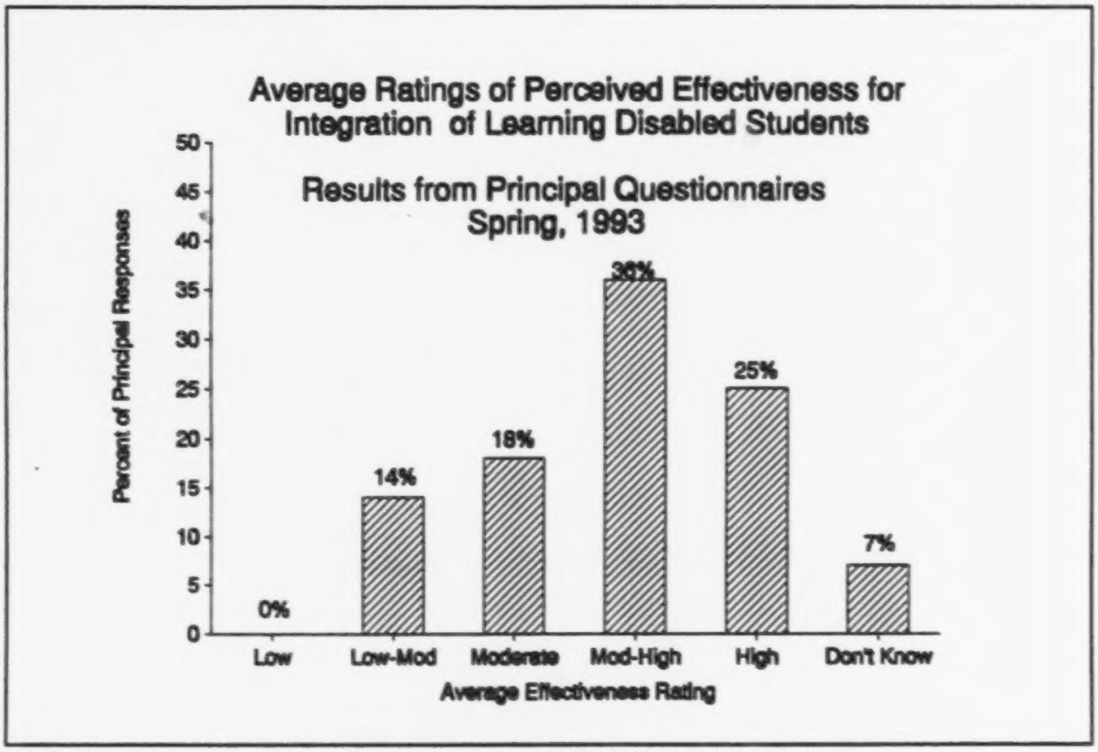
- student needs can not always be met in an integrated classroom setting;
- teachers need to have adequate training in the model to understand and buy into the integration philosophy in order for it to work;
- there must be built in planning time to communicate and share goals, develop lessons, and discuss student needs and how to meet them;
- teachers believe that in order to integrate services effectively, integration costs more money because it takes more time and more people to accomplish.

**Factors which inhibit successful integration.** Other factors can inhibit successful integration. Staff turnover can interrupt integration as new staff take time to get to know one another's particular strengths to tap when working with students. Perceived inhibitors to successful integration are markedly similar to what educators see as weaknesses in the model. A content analysis of responses from classroom teachers and specialists shows these perceived inhibitors to successful integration:

- **lack of planning time**, without which teams end up having to "wing it" or the specialist comes in and circulates around the room like a classroom aide;
- **lack of adequate staffing** and the sheer numbers of LD students who need services in one or more areas;
- the fact that **student needs can't always be met exclusively in integrated settings,** and the difficulty involved in finding time to do a balance of integration and pull-out;
- integration is a **teacher-dependent model** in that success depends on the level in which teachers believe it is the right thing to do and how much they work towards making it happen.

## Effectiveness of Integration for LD students

Principals rated the overall effectiveness of integration for learning disabled students on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high).



The bar chart above represents average ratings of extent of integration for those LD students who have received services in some type of integrated setting. Results indicate that, in general, principals believe the effectiveness of integration for these students is moderate to high.

Results from interviews with classroom teachers and resource teachers indicate a lesser degree of optimism, especially with certain types of students and their needs. Regular classroom teachers and resource teachers believe from their experiences that integration benefits some LD students more than others. Students who benefit more from integration, according to both regular education teachers and district special educators are:

- **students who are not too far below grade level in their work;**

- **students who have developed compensatory and independent skills so that they are able to attend to a task;**

- **students who are more outgoing verbally and socially so that their participation in groups enhances their learning, especially in cooperative learning activities;**

- **students who can adapt to the profile of the class as a whole. If a classroom has disproportionate number of "challenging" and needy students with behavior and/or academic difficulties (low but not qualified in a program) learning disabled students may not get the attention, instruction, and adaptations needed for success in a regular classroom setting. In this case, the regular classroom may not be the "least restrictive environment appropriate for the student." An LD student who is easily distracted may not do well in this type of setting.**

- **students whose self-esteem may be adversely affected by leaving the room.**

Some teachers gave examples of times when leaving LD students in the regular classroom is not appropriate and could be damaging to a student's self-esteem, especially if they need direct instruction, such as in math, that is one or more grade levels below what the rest of the class is doing. Educators told us that students know who the slow ones are, regardless of whether they stay in the room or not and regardless of how they are grouped. Whether the integration can be structured for student success is an issue to be dealt with, and how much adaptation of curriculum will occur without drawing the attention of other students. Some educators in our district believe it is sometimes better to adapt materials and instruct students in a small group setting where they can feel successful rather than keep them in a regular room where, as one principal put it, they are never "top dog." Again, this is true for some students but not all of them. The potential stigma for the child, with either pull-out or integration, is something that must be considered.

We spoke with teachers who have seen remarkable growth in resource students in the integrated setting. Part of the reason is that they have been careful to integrate services for students who can effectively be instructed there, and partly it is because they are able to serve students in both integrated and pull-out settings. One resource teacher noted that her students achieved a lot more than she thought they ever would in an integrated team teaching setting because they remained in the classroom and were challenged within that setting.

The ability to serve students using a balance of both settings brings up an issue teachers discussed time and time again -- **scheduling** services for a large number of students scattered across many classrooms. Flexibility in scheduling specialists into classrooms and adequate staffing to meet student needs in both integrated and pull-out settings are required for successful integration. At the beginning of the 1992-93 school year, 1104 students with a primary handicapping condition of "learning disabled" were being served in a special education program. By the end of the year, that number had increased to 1220. Staffing for the following school year is determined based upon numbers of students receiving services during the spring of the previous year, and caseloads were staffed based upon 1210 students. Still teachers perceive an increasing caseload when students are added to their rosters throughout the course of a school year. Staffing for learning disabled students averages about 30-35 students to 1 teacher. If 30 or more students are needing special education services, the school may get a special education aide, depending on the students and the intensity of their needs.

**Frequent Concerns.** Building principals report that one of the most frequent concerns expressed by their staff regarding integrating services is that the specialist is not available when needed most, usually during language arts and math block times. Some teachers have changed their classroom schedules to make integration possible. Others have not. With heavy caseloads, some specialists feel "locked in" or overly committed by the time second semester rolls around and admit that some students who remain in the classroom for services would do better in a pull-out setting, but there is no room left in the schedule for a pull-out slot for the child. The "ideal" would be to try integration first for a child if it seems at all appropriate, and then to adjust his or her program and placement if it becomes clear that he or she requires some one-on-one instruction time. This is especially true for the more severely disabled children who need intense, remedial instruction. Unfortunately, the ideal is just that, and teachers are left with the reality of scheduling, compromising, and nabbing a few minutes here and a few minutes there when trying to plan lessons together.

For these reasons and others, the placement decision to provide integrated services in the regular classroom setting MUST be made on a student by student basis, depending on the needs of the students and whether those needs can effectively be met in the classroom. We found examples of integrated programs at particular grade levels, where all LD students were to be served in the classroom, thus counting towards the service time on a child's IEP. One problem with this approach is that when a specialist integrates, he or she very often helps other children in the room and cannot focus on the needs of their identified students. This gives the impression that services are "watered down" for special learners, even though other strategies could be tried that might meet a student's objective without direct assistance from the special educator. For example, a regular classroom teacher, classroom aide, or peer tutor could work with the child.

**Considering Other Options.** If the regular classroom is not the appropriate placement, it does not mean that integration cannot or should not occur in some other form. It means that other options should be considered, such as (if possible) a balance between integration and pull-out, carefully choosing which activities would be most beneficial. For example, integrating instruction in language arts such as journal writing, which is already self-paced, might be appropriate for integration but the student may have to be pulled out for more direct one on one instruction in a specific reading skill. Another option would be to try reverse integration, having regular education students who would benefit from additional instruction go to the resource room with the students. One method of integration which has been tried has been to put a small group of learning disabled children into one regular classroom at a particular grade level so that the scheduling is more streamlined for integrating services. This approach can work nicely if the regular classroom teacher is prepared for it, does not become overburdened, and has enough support from the special programs. However, some educators see this as "tracking" and do not agree that it is best for students.

The frustration expressed by our teaching staff, especially special education teachers, is that they are spread so thin having to plan and organize and schedule for so many children scattered across so many classrooms. If a balance of some integration and some individual and/or small group instruction is best for a student, when can both be accomplished?

Realistically, each building must look at the numbers of students who qualify for services and set a schedule at the beginning of the school year to serve these students. However, as the school year goes on and more students are identified for services, there may be no choice but to abandon an integrated setting with, for example, one second grade teacher, and opt for pulling out learning disabled students from each of the four second grade classrooms in the building.

Innovations have been tried which pull students from other classrooms into one of the grade level classrooms rather than having them go to the resource room. If teachers at a particular grade level are planning together, then appropriate, cohesive, content and instruction can be delivered which enhances and reinforces the regular classroom program. More often than not, teachers at the same grade level cover material at different times of the year, or pace their content coverage depending on the needs of their class as a whole. Resource teachers have expressed frustration with having to teach an "in-class pull-out" which can be distracting and less effective than a quieter resource setting.

**Noise and class size.** One intermediate classroom teacher feels this is a drawback to the effectiveness of integration. Classrooms can become noisy when two adults work in a classroom and this is not a productive environment for some students who have a hard time filtering out distractions. One teacher who strongly supports integration told us, "Not all kids should be in a regular classroom. They need a small classroom environment so you [the teacher] can immediately tune in to a student. When you have 30 kids packed in, and barely enough walking space, you can't eliminate the noise factor. I can't change the environment to meet the needs of special students in this case." Clearly, class size is a consideration for integration.

**Coordination.** The key to integrating the resource teacher, as expressed previously, is adequate TIME to plan and coordinate lessons to meet the range of student needs in a classroom. One very successful example of integrated services was observed in a first grade classroom in which a resource teacher integrated services three times per week. Not only were three identified LD students served by this specialist, but also two regular education children who were low functioning in the area of reading. Having the specialist work with these five students automatically lowered the PTR for the regular classroom teacher who conducted a reading lesson with a group of about 10 students at another location in the room. Simultaneously, another small group of 5 students worked on independent activities.

Several "key factors" were present during this integration. First, both teachers were comfortable working together in the classroom. Second, the regular classroom teacher had prior experience as a resource teacher and was more apt to believe in and see value in the integration model. Third, the resource teacher had realized that one of the students needed more intense work than she was able to provide in the integrated setting and was able to schedule a time in which she could work with him one on one. Thus, she was satisfied that the needs of the students, all students, were being met. Built in planning time was not there but because the classroom teacher had experience as a resource teacher, she understood and felt comfortable with the expectations for her LD students. The effectiveness of integration for these students was influenced by the availability of teachers who could team effectively and who had the necessary training in teaching special students, including making modifications to the curriculum so that no student was sitting there "lost."

The resource staff members who were interviewed for this study, whether they are integrating a lot or hardly at all, support the **concept** of integration as one way of delivering services to students but are quick to point out that it is not the only way. When asked what they need to integrate better, they most frequently mentioned "planning time" and "more special education staff." Most felt that schools need the flexibility to choose which model to use with which children based on their needs. As one former resource teacher said, "It [integration] is not always the **best** way because you have varied students, varied needs. But it's a mighty good way." Another classroom teacher told us, "In an ideal setting, it can be the best way, but not the only way. The idea is great. We just need to do it better." One comment from an intermediate resource teacher was, "The integration model could work with more manpower."

Several teachers we interviewed believe that the "Issaquah" model is a positive direction in which to move. The model is named for the Issaquah School District of Washington State where it has been functioning for over ten years. The Issaquah model involves instructing 6 to 8 mildly learning disabled students in the regular classroom, including meeting their IEP goals and objectives within the regular classroom setting. Students are instructed by a teacher who is dually certified in both regular education and special education, with the help of a half time aide (Madge, 1990). The district should monitor and report on the progress at Ladd Elementary School this coming year as they institute their LIFT (Ladd Integration Format Teaching) program, a modification of the Issaquah program. The information gleaned from such a review may be helpful as Arctic Light comes on line with their integrated program, and as other district schools look toward successful working models.

Educators discussed how their roles had changed with integration of special services. Feelings are mixed. Resource teachers say they enjoy a greater degree of familiarity with more students than previously. At the same time they feel a loss of autonomy to pick and choose instructional activities that they feel will meet specific IEP goals. They also report a new awareness from their experiences in regular classrooms. They see what "normal" kids are doing and it has, in some cases, increased their expectations of special needs students. Several resource teachers feel that peers can provide motivation which leads to a higher level of achievement for resource students, a real benefit of integration. They've also seen students struggle to keep up with a curriculum that moves too fast.

**Effect on learning disabled students.** When asked about the progress of the learning disabled students, teachers who are currently integrating or have integrated in the past said students with mild learning disabilities and strong independent and compensatory skills thrived in an integrated setting. Special educators found that the program they were able to provide to identified students with more intense needs in an integrated setting was less focused, even at times watered down. This is the cause of their concerns about special education students' needs not being met with integration. It appears to be a trade off which benefits some but not others.

**Effect on regular education students.** Teachers were asked if they felt integrating services for LD students affected the achievement of regular education students. Most felt that it had not, except for perhaps in a positive way because an extra adult in the room provided more opportunity to help and give feedback to other students in the room. One primary classroom teacher told us that integration of services for learning disabled students "may help the achievement of regular education students when they become peer tutors."

The bottom line is that teachers want and see a need for choices in ways to serve students. The majority support a balance of both integrated and pull-out programs: integration to achieve broader gains of remaining in the class (if this is appropriate to the student), and possible social gains; and pull-out for the more specific skills work. Pull-out time, according to resource personnel, allows the resource teacher to keep track of progress the child is making for his or her future instructional planning and for record keeping which is sometimes difficult to accomplish in the classroom environment.

Every classroom teacher and special educator told us that integration is very difficult to pull off effectively without planning time. As one resource teacher told us, "This is a teacher dependent model. I know of districts with planning time for integration. They have a specific planning time to work with a specific teacher. The success rate is so much higher when it's done that way." Our teachers, by contract, have a prep period every day. But as one resource teacher said, that time is precious and already over-used, and if we take it for collaboration and planning purposes, we don't have any time left to prepare materials for the actual lesson.

At least one school has come up with a way to increase the amount of planning time for teachers. Break aides are used while the students eat lunch so that teachers at a particular grade level can meet with each other and other service providers. Break aides must be available and dependable in order for this arrangement to work. A school counselor at one of the schools we visited said next year plans were to have the counselor teach a lesson so that the teacher could plan with a specialist. Having other school staff, such as teachers of extended day kindergartens, cover classrooms in order to allow planning time for teachers at other grade level might be an option. Other schools may have figured a way to garner planning time, and a more in-depth look at ways to plan together should be completed so that these ideas can be shared.

## Integrating Services for Communication Disordered Students

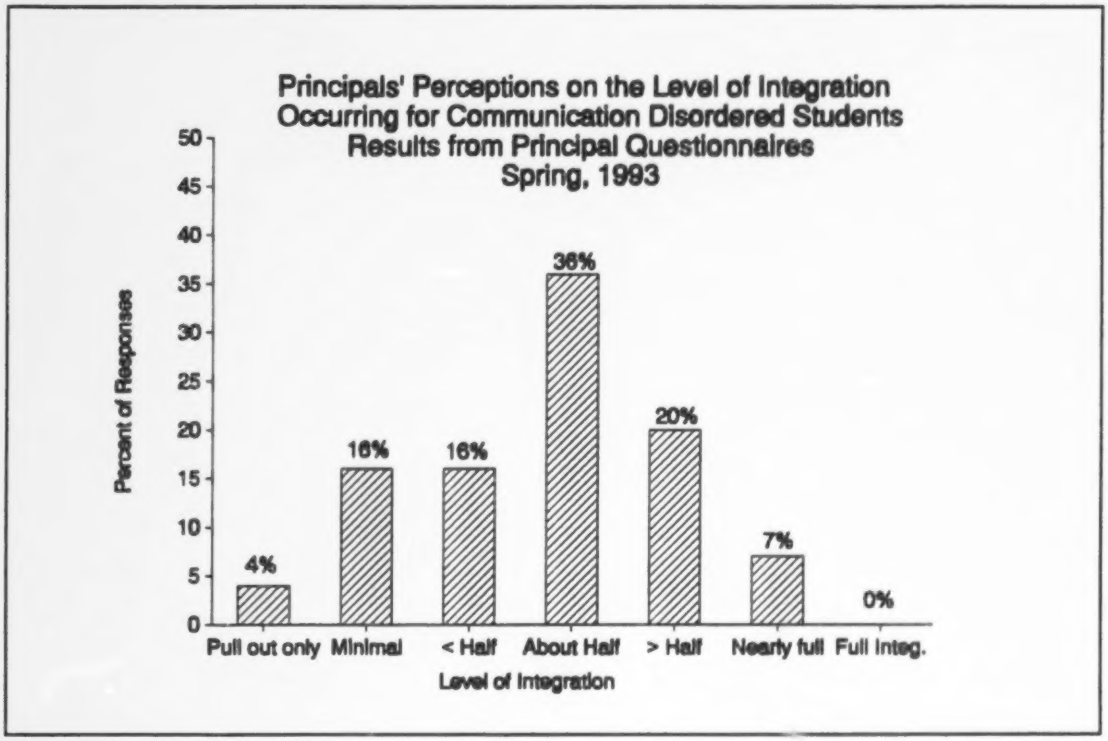
At the end of the 1992-93 school year, 618 students were being served in programs for communication disorders (CD) as their primary handicapping condition. Many other students are served for speech/language as a secondary handicapping condition (figures on file at Program Planning and Evaluation Office).

The ***Special Education Procedures Manual, March, 1992*** provides the following federal definition of speech impaired:

> "Speech impaired" means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language deficit or a voice impairment which adversely affects educational performance.

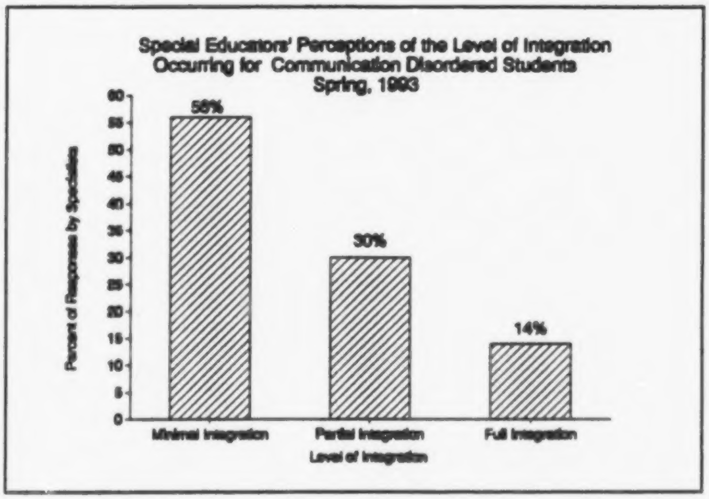
Many of the issues with integrating services for CD students are the same as for our LD student population. The following discussion focuses on integration issues for speech impaired students.

**Extent of Integration Occurring.** All schools have programs which serve students with communication disorders. Principals were asked to estimate their perception of the level of integration occurring in their buildings. A distribution of their responses appears in the bar chart below. Results from principals indicate that well over half of the speech and language students receive services in some form of integrated setting. The most frequent response was that about half of the students are receiving about half of their services in an integrated setting.



Speech/language teachers were contacted in April of 1993 and asked for a count of students who receive services in a "primarily pull-out" setting, "partially integrated" setting, or "fully integrated" setting. The bar chart below illustrates responses from special educators who serve children with communication disorders. Results show that for the 1992-93 school year, specialists had integrated services for about 44% of CD students. Principals tended to overestimate the amount of integration occurring for CD students in their buildings.

Just as the range of severity for learning disabled students is vast, so it is with children who have speech and/or language difficulties. This is an important consideration for integrating services for students. Students with **speech** problems have trouble actually producing speech. Some examples are students who stutter or who have articulation problems which make them difficult to understand. **Language** problems also encompass language delays or deviations from normal language development which may affect intellectual performance, achievement, and/or social behavior. Language disorders are those acquired after some level of understanding and production of language has been established. The turnover rate for students with speech disorders is usually quite high as they receive the help they need and are able to exit the program (Cartwright, 1985).



With the exception of children enrolled in speech/language preschool programs, students with communication disorders are assigned to a regular classroom. The most widely accepted model for serving these students was to provide services in a pull-out resource room. Integrating services means finding ways to attain goals and objectives from a student's IEP in the regular classroom setting.

**Strengths for integrating CD students.** Table 4 on page 31 of this report shows responses of principals regarding the primary strengths of integrating speech/language students. Listed most frequently are: students are not singled out when they can remain in the regular classroom (44% said this), there is more cohesiveness in the students' program and less fragmentation of instruction (37%), and students are exposed to positive role models (30%). In the principals' eyes, **key factors for the success of integration for speech/language students** are planning time (listed by 56% of principals) and teacher willingness (41%). These results appear in Table 5.

Classroom teachers and speech/language specialists were interviewed at our six target schools. Similar to LD students, we found a range of support from low to high, and some commonalities in what teachers see as strengths for integrating speech and language services. Primary strengths are (and they sound similar to issues for LD students):

- students are able to remain in the classroom and not miss out on what is happening;

- students are exposed to positive role models for speech and language;

- students in resource programs for speech may become too dependent on the individual and/or small group attention, and may not be able to perform at the same level when faced with a whole class instructional setting. This is true for activities such as following directions;

- There is less fragmentation in instruction since specialists can work with the classroom curriculum as a vehicle for providing services;

We found that in order for students to reap the benefits of integrated services, several **key factors** must be in place. Again, these factors are nearly the same as what teachers and specialists told us about learning disabled students. These are:

- **planning time** for regular education teachers and specialists;

- **willingness** on the part of both regular education and speech/language service providers;

- **compatibility in teaching styles and personalities** that promotes a positive working relationship;

- **flexibility** in scheduling and instructional delivery.

**Weaknesses in integrating CD students.** Principals were also asked about the weaknesses in integrating services for speech and language students. Results appear in Table 6. The most frequent response was that some students will be more successful with individual instruction. Specifically, students who have problems with articulation, stuttering, quality of voice or fluency usually need one-on-one, direct instruction in their specific area of need.

Eight principals said that a primary weakness is that some teachers and specialists do not believe integration is the right approach. In other words, the absence of an "integrating philosophy" is a weakness in implementing integration, where teacher acceptance and support is critical for its success. **Lack of time** to accomplish goals in a regular classroom setting and **lack of staff** were cited as the key factors which inhibit successful integration of CD students.

Teachers and specialists were asked what they see as a weakness with the integration model. Their most frequent responses are listed below:

- student needs can not always be met and are not being met in the regular classroom;
- it is impossible to get around to all the different classrooms, even all of the classrooms where teachers are willing to integrate. How do you choose to integrate services for one group of students in classroom A, and not for the students in classroom B?;
- there is currently no planning time for classroom teachers to work with specialists. There must be built in planning time to communicate and share goals for students, plan lesson content and delivery, and follow up.

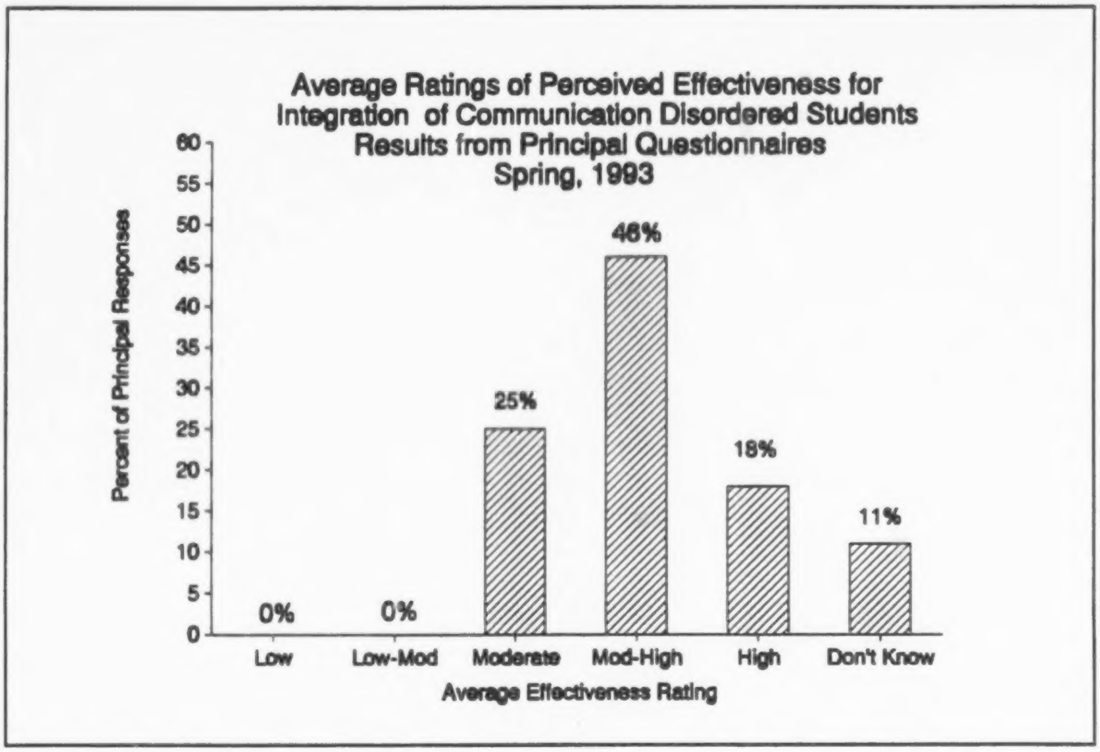
**Factors which inhibit successful integration.** Staff turnover, lack of planning time, and heavy caseloads can inhibit successful integration efforts. Each time a new specialist is hired into the district or transfers to a different school, integration starts all over again. It takes time to build foundations and working relationships. Successful team teaching doesn't just happen. It takes time and effort. Our research found that successful integration activities which occur at a school one year may not occur the next because of changes in teaching staff, principal leadership, student needs, and attitudes in general. We visited one school where lots of speech and language integration had occurred a few years ago. Now, there is very little integration happening even though some students would benefit from an integrated placement more than they would from being pulled into a resource room. Specialists feel overwhelmed with the number of students they need to see, and often find scheduling to be a major stumbling block in their efforts to both be in classrooms and see students on an individual basis. Most teachers and specialists believe that some students benefit more from integration than others. The educators we interviewed believe that students with the following characteristics benefit more from integration than other students:

- students with mild speech/language difficulties who are able to follow directions and complete class work without needing to have every task broken down or continual, extensive modifications;
- students who need more social language to develop their own language abilities;

- students who feel self-conscious about leaving the room, as long as the type of service they need does not draw attention to their area of need.

**Concerns.** Concerns expressed by classroom teachers are listed in Table 8, with the most frequent concern being the lack of planning time. Specialists echo this concern, but are also concerned about large caseloads.

Principals were asked to rate the effectiveness of integrating services for students with speech and language problems. Results of average ratings from principals appear in the bar chart below.



Average Ratings of Perceived Effectiveness for Integration of Communication Disordered Students Results from Principal Questionnaires Spring, 1993

Most principals reported that they believe there to be a high level of effectiveness for those CD students who have received integrated services. This is largely because the level of integration of services for CD students is occurring with willing staff and in combination with pull-out services. Specialists have mixed feelings concerning the effectiveness of integrating speech and language services, and believe it is highly dependent upon the individual needs of the student. Students who are in the regular classroom for a majority of their day have access to peer role models already. Sometimes it isn't enough, and individual attention is warranted. In these cases, it is best to have the specialist and the classroom teachers communicate with each other so that the services students receive in the resource setting are relevant to what is being taught in the regular classroom. The solution goes back once again to consideration of student needs, open communication, and shared responsibility.

## Integrating Services for Gifted-Talented Students

Integrating services for students who qualify to receive special instruction because they are gifted/talented (GT) presents issues very different from those discussed for learning disabled, communication disordered, or other disabled students. Most of the federal laws are designed to provide equal educational opportunities for disabled children. A federal definition of gifted and talented children was passed into law in 1978 through the Gifted and Talented Children's Act of 1978, but states are not bound by the act in the same way that they are bound by public laws concerning disabled students. The state Department of Education drafted statutes for providing services to either gifted or disabled students, statutes which were driven by the federal law for the disabled. Thus, the "least restrictive environment" clause does apply to gifted students under state, but not federal, regulation.

Alaska Regulation 4 AAC 52.130 (a) provides the following information regarding the identification of gifted students:

> "[Students must]-- exhibit outstanding intellect, ability or creative talent which meets the written criteria for identification of gifted students and that students meet these criteria before further determination of eligibility;
> -- require special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective; and
> -- be certified by a multidisciplinary team as qualifying for and needing special education services for the gifted."

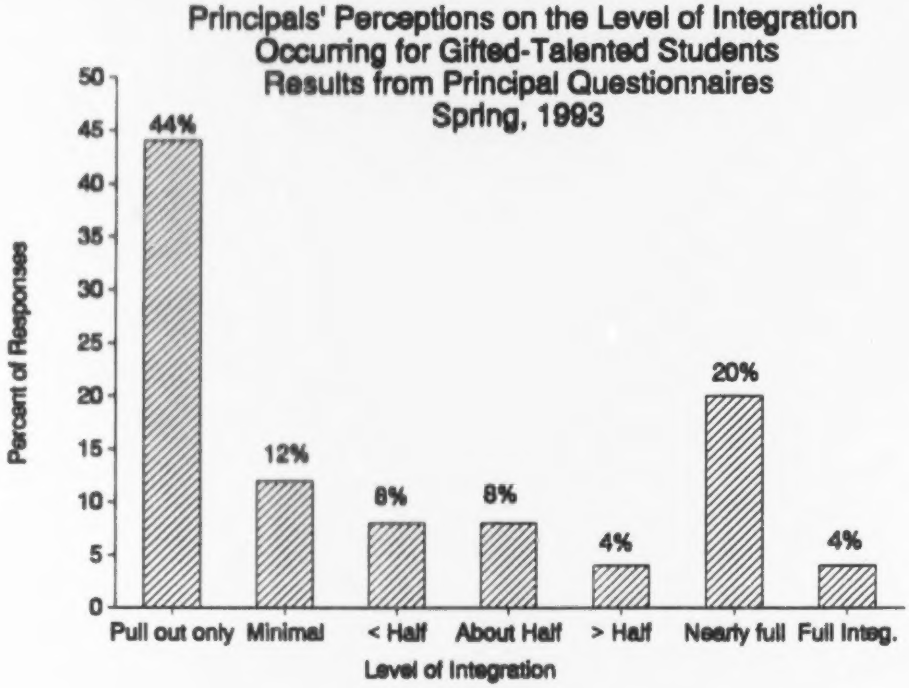
Scores from evaluation instruments cannot be the sole criteria for identifying gifted students. Parental input and teacher recommendations are included in the evaluation of the student along with performance on tests. Similar to students within other special needs areas, there are wide ranging differences among gifted students -- in IQ, creativity, intellect, social skills, and what the students need from a special program. The students look different from each other, behave differently, and come from a variety of backgrounds. Some gifted students need a more challenging classroom environment rather than a separate setting for services. Others are determined to need special facilities, equipment, or methods in order to meet goals established in their individualized program.

All district schools have a program for gifted students. Most schools employ part-time teachers to provide these services. Some teachers of gifted students teach resource classes for part of the day, some are split between schools, and others team teach in a regular education classroom for part of the school day. At the end of the 1992-93 school year, there were 742 GT students in the district, or about 5% of the year-end enrollment. Staffing ratios are set at a approximately 40 students per teacher. Additional teaching and/or aide support is provided when numbers increase beyond this ratio.

Integration for GT students can be more difficult to justify to parents because the arguments for inclusion in regular classroom settings for these students are not the same as for other special students. Whereas a major concern with integrating learning disabled or speech/language students is to decrease the amount of regular classroom instruction time they miss it's not an issue with a population of children who can walk back into the room and pick right up on what's going on. The more challenging GT activities provide these students with the motivation to achieve beyond the regular classroom curriculum and these added accomplishments promote positive self esteem. Some GT teachers are wondering how to provide a "differentiated curriculum" and meet specific goals by integrating services. A differentiated curriculum is one which is designed to meet the needs of students who learn faster, solve problems more readily, and who manipulate abstract ideas (Gifted/Talented Procedures Manual, October 1992). The majority of GT teachers who integrate services also provide pull-out time to focus on individual needs as specified in the student's IEP. Even more GT teachers, however, operate a strictly pull-out program, believing that this particular group of students can be better served that way.

**Extent of Integration Occurring for GT Students.** The GT program is the least integrated of all special programs offered in the district, although GT teachers are developing ways to accommodate their students when not teaching them in exclusively small group settings. Additionally, many classroom teachers are open to having at least some GT services occur in their classrooms so that other students can benefit as well. The level of openness depends on how committed they are to integration as a philosophy and the quality of working relationships between GT teachers and classroom teachers.

Principals were asked to indicate the amount of integration occurring for gifted students. Their responses are represented in the following bar chart. Principals report that about 56% of GT students are either minimally integrated or not integrated at all for services.



Specialists who serve GT students in our district were asked to report the actual numbers of students being served in primarily pull-out, partially integrated, and fully integrated settings. The following bar chart shows the teacher-reported level of integration occurring for GT students. They say that about 78% of students are served in a primarily pull-out setting. But this should not be taken to mean that benefits are not occurring for other students. One GT teacher spoke of the importance of having GT students go back and share their knowledge and experiences with the rest of the class. Many GT programs incorporate activities such as plays, essay writing, and productions which have schoolwide benefits.

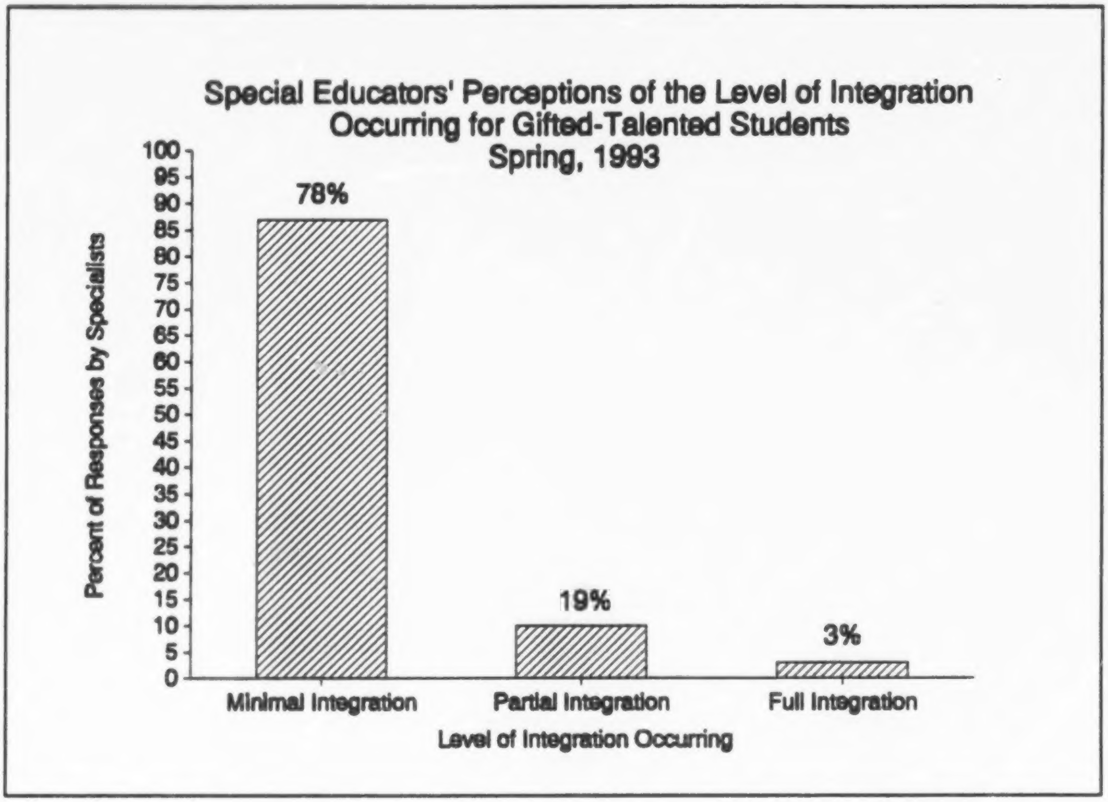
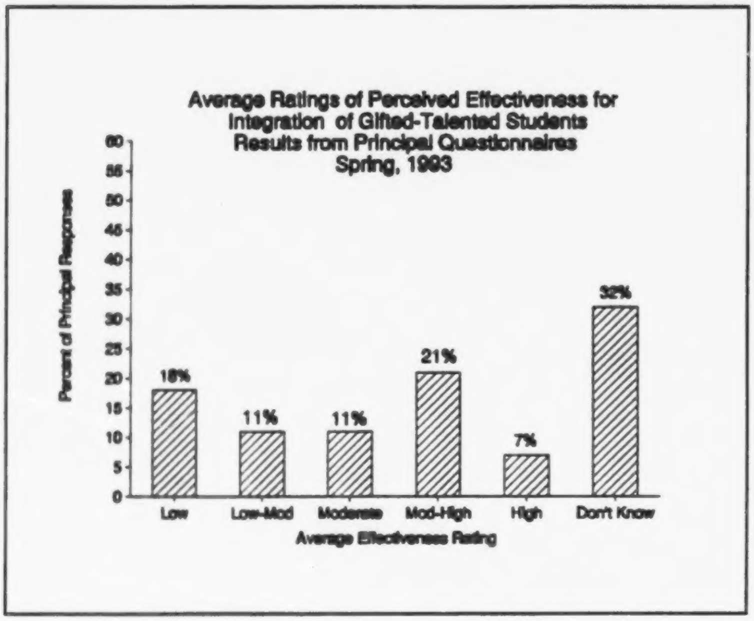


Table 4 shows that principals feel the primary strength of integrating services for GT students is not so that the GT students might receive benefit from the integration; but the most frequent response was that "all students can benefit from extra services and instruction." Teachers of gifted/talented students believe that the time spent in a challenging setting with intellectual peers is important to the self-esteem and motivation of gifted students. GT teachers also argue that these students already spend a great deal of time in the regular classroom setting where their unique and individual needs are not always met by classroom teachers who are working hard to teach a classroom of students.

**Effectiveness of integration for GT students.** Principal responses regarding the perceived effectiveness for integration of GT is shown in the bar chart on the following page.



Average Ratings of Perceived Effectiveness for Integration of Gifted-Talented Students
Results from Principal Questionnaires
Spring, 1993

Key factors for the success of integrating services for GT students, according to principals, are: teacher willingness (both regular and special education), positive and flexible working relationships, and having time to plan and collaborate. Many regular education training programs do not give adequate focus to adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of gifted students. Training developing in-class enrichment activities for students who need to go above and beyond the "normal" demands of the curriculum may help meet the needs of GT students. The bar chart indicates a higher degree of ambiguity regarding integration of services for these students, with 32% of principals responding that they "don't know" if integration is effective.

The majority of GT teachers believe that the specific needs of individual gifted students can best be met in a separate pull-out setting. As a group they believe that integration slows the progress of GT students. Integrating GT services benefits the regular classroom students more than it benefits the gifted students.

**Growing popularity of Enrichment Programs.** Classroom teachers who were interviewed during this study expressed an interest in having more GT services delivered in the regular classroom setting. This would enable the GT teachers to reach more students and challenge the bright students who do not qualify for "official" GT services. Most GT teachers feel they are open and available to provide enrichment materials to classroom teachers. Some have started very successful enrichment programs in which other students can enroll. Topics have included foreign language, special science focuses, research and writing activities. One school is moving toward a schoolwide enrichment program which is based upon a philosophy that all children have traits of giftedness, attributes that can be encouraged such as task commitment and developing creativity. The teacher's job is to discover those traits and provide opportunities that allow children to make the most of those attributes.

Teachers of gifted students were asked whether they believe some GT students would benefit more from integration than others. The consensus, at least among those we interviewed, is that the regular education students stand to benefit the most from this model, not the GT students. One GT teacher used the computer lab extensively but also individualized instruction in research in content areas. Offering a balance of both integrated and pull-out services might prove most beneficial to the largest number of students. Logistically, it is very difficult to integrate services when positions are shared between schools or between positions within a building.

The parents we contacted were mostly satisfied with the GT services their children were receiving in separate resource settings. As a group, these parents believe their children need specialized, focused instruction which they feel their children do not receive by remaining solely in the regular classroom setting. Some parents told us that it is their child who prefers to leave the classroom for GT because they can work on projects without being interrupted. One parent of a GT child acknowledged the benefits of integration to other students, not only "identified" students. The majority feel they were highly involved in the placement decision for their student, and are satisfied with the services their children received in the 1992-93 school year.

## Integrating Services for Emotionally Impaired Students

During the 1992-93 school year, the district served 110 students whose primary handicapping condition was Emotionally Impaired (EI). This is less than 1% of the total district enrollment. The national statistic in 1988 was 0.9% of the total student population. Districtwide programs for EI students are located in five elementary and seven secondary schools. The staffing ratio varies according to the severity of student needs, but a general guideline is one teacher and one aide to no more than 12 students. Additional aide support is added when there are more than 12 students in any one EI program.

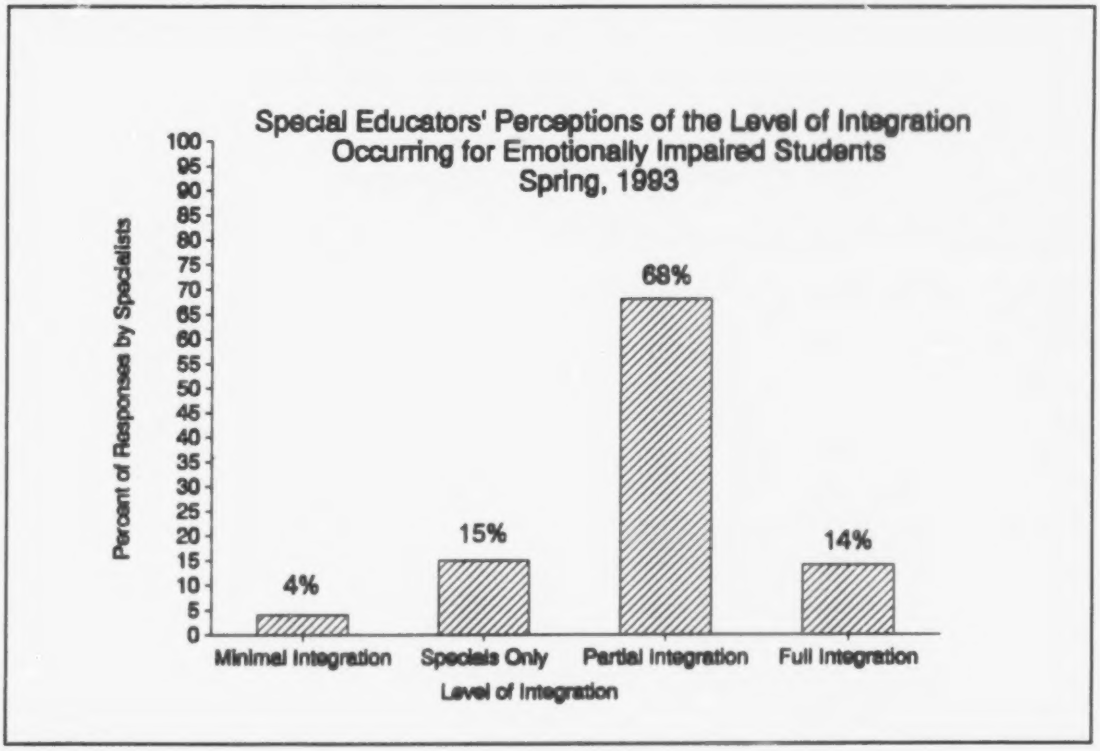
The district's *Special Education Procedures Manual, March, 1992* states, using the federal definition,

> "Emotionally impaired" means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance.
>
> a. An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
> b. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
> c. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
> d. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression;
> e. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

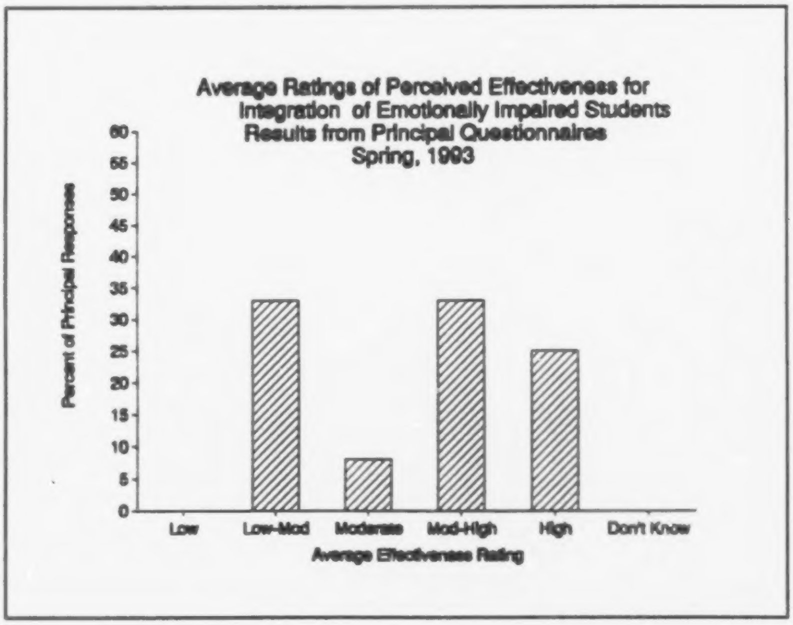
**Extent of Integration Occurring for Emotionally Impaired Students**. The bar chart on the following page presents responses from principal questionnaires regarding the extent of integration occurring for EI students. Special educators who teach in the EI program were contacted and asked to provide information regarding the number of EI students in their program who were in self-contained settings, partially integrated, and fully integrated settings. Results from the "census" data are also presented in the bar chart on the following page for the district's twelve EI programs. In the EI programs districtwide, the majority of children are integrated to some extent. Few remain strictly self-contained (4%) and some do achieve full integration (15% according to districtwide EI teachers).

The primary strengths of integration for EI students, according to principals, is the **exposure to positive behavior role models.** These children are often bright but their impulsivity and/or inappropriate actions isolate them socially. Principals indicate that key factors for the success of integration for EI students are: **willingness** on the part of teachers to include these children in their classrooms for part of a school day, having **planning time** with the EI teacher regarding expectations (academic, social and behavioral), and **teaching styles** that are compatible with the needs of the particular student (see Table 5). The **classroom teacher's level of knowledge, skills, and expertise** regarding how to effectively deal with emotionally impaired students is also a key factor.

Principals perceive **primary weaknesses** in integrating EI students to be **large class sizes** which are already challenging to regular classroom teachers, **lack of support for the regular**



**classroom teacher** (aide support and assistance readily available when needed), and the need for **more knowledge and understanding of EI students and their needs,** including effective ways of dealing with them. **Key factors which inhibit** successful integration for these students are not lack of planning time and collaboration (as with LD and speech/language students) but resistance to integrating students



with emotional problems and distractions they may cause in the day to day operation of a regular classroom (Table 7).

Principals report that common concerns expressed by EI teachers have to do with **finding appropriate classroom placements** for their students. Districtwide programs often remain at the same school for years, resulting in the same classroom teachers being asked over and over again to integrate special learners into their classrooms. EI teachers who participated in the study say they are aware of the attitudes of classroom teachers with regard to integrating particular populations of students, and they will not approach a teacher who is against having an EI child in their room. Rather, the placements must be chosen carefully by the child study team, because the goal of the EI program is to put EI children back with their regular education peers successfully and responsibly. The concern most frequently expressed by regular classroom teachers is that they need more training and expertise in effective strategies for teaching EI students, strategies often not covered in teacher education programs. Regular classroom teachers want to know as much as possible about the student PRIOR to placement into their classrooms, and they want a safety net that if the child becomes unruly, they can be taken back to the self-contained EI classroom.

Most of the district's EI programs are highly structured, based on a level system where students must demonstrate appropriate behavior before advancing to the point where they spend more and more time in regular education settings and less time in the self-contained setting. Most require the student to use a "carry card" so that the classroom teacher, library assistant or music teacher can indicate the child's progress. This gives school staff a way to regularly communicate progress back to the EI teacher. Students in the program can continue to "earn" more time in regular education settings.

EI programs operate differently from other special education programs, and our study found that some are more successful than others. We observed that the most successful EI programs are those that are well established within the school (have been there for years), are highly structured where the EI teacher takes full responsibility for the student at first; where lots of communication occurs prior to placement, including a run down on the types of behaviors to expect from a child; where aide support is available to ensure the integration is successful and to keep track of the academic requirements for the student, such as homework assignments. The

EI teachers we interviewed strongly feel that staffing helps the success of integration for their program. Teachers are more likely to agree to have a child if they are accompanied by an aide.

Teachers did not outright admit it, but the quality of the EI teacher and program makes a big difference in that they need to be able to trust the EI teacher and freely and openly communicate regarding their concerns. One EI teacher said that a key issue for the success of integration is the ability to effectively determine a child's preparedness for the classroom environment. Management styles and behavioral strategies must be discussed and must be compatible. EI teachers feel that there are weaknesses with the integration model in that our district is serving the most severe students and some may need a more restricted program. It is difficult to deal with a child's needs that are exceptions to the way the program is structured and carried through. High caseloads and large regular class sizes also affect the success of integrating EI students.

EI teachers were asked if they believe integration benefits some students more than others. According to teachers we spoke with, students who stand to benefit most from integration are:

- **students who respond to the rewards of the program and seek out acknowledgements for their behavior.**

Students who benefit least are those who are in inappropriate classroom placements, those with "exaggerated frustration levels where even with available rewards, they persist in their inappropriate behaviors." Integration, according to one EI teacher, is not good for students who are "so different in background that they do not fit in with others."

Most EI teachers believe that self-esteem for their students is tied in with the regular classroom, because that is where a student's performance objectives can be met academically, behaviorally, and socially as coping skills are developed.

## Integrating Services for Intensive Resource Students

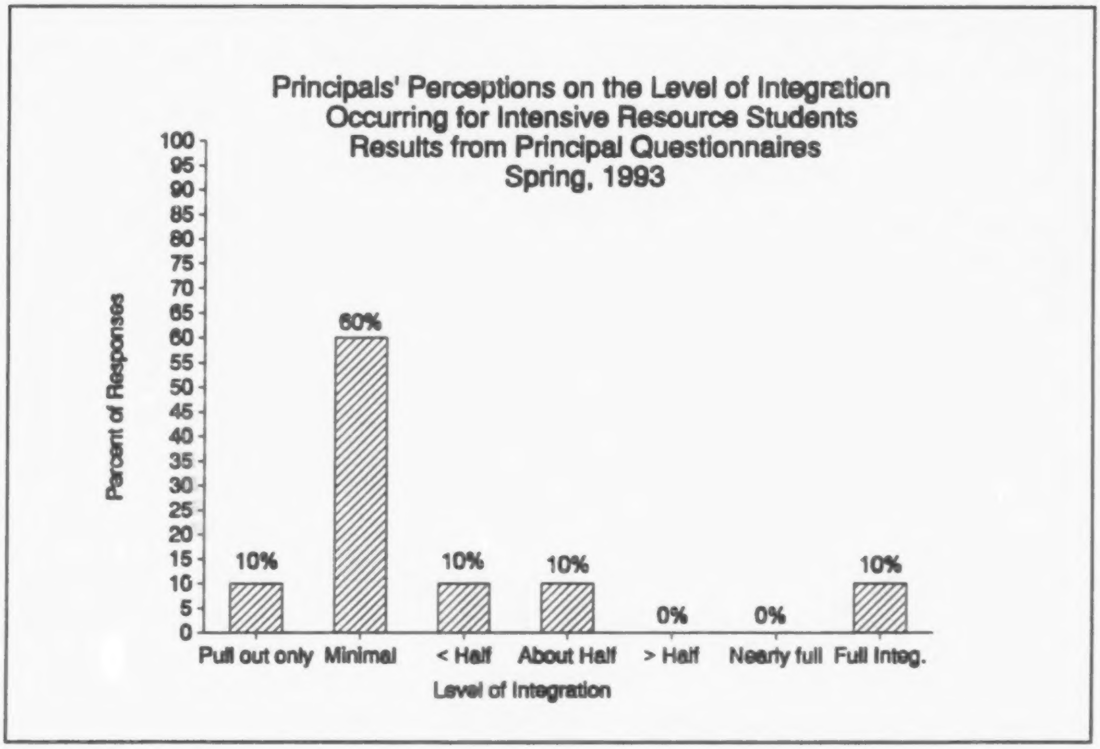
Implications for the integration of intensive resource students are not the same as for any other group of special learners discussed so far. Intensive resource students are those who are mildly, moderately, or severely mentally disabled. The mental disability may or may not be accompanied by other problems such as health impairment, speech difficulties, or visual problems. Many of these students require additional services from physical and/or occupational therapists. There are thirteen programs for students in intensive resource programs in the district. This does not include preschool programs or the integrated Deaf Education program.

In the past, these are the students who would have been in separate schools from regular education children, and in the more recent past, these children have been educated in mostly full time special classes. Our study indicates that efforts are being made throughout the district to include intensive resource children with regular education peers, not so much in academic areas but for social purposes. The level of staffing depends on the severity of the needs for students in the program, but a general guideline is one teacher and one aide for between 8 to 12 mentally disabled students, not including the programs for students with severe/profound handicaps. Programs with more than 12 students are provided added support. Intensive resource programs for severe/profound children are staffed at about 6 children to one teacher and two aides. Additional support is provided when needed.

**Extent of Integration Occurring for Intensive Resource Students.** Principals who have intensive resource programs in their schools were asked to indicate the extent of integration which was occurring. Results appear in the bar chart on the following page. Principals report minimal integration for about 60% of intensive resource students. A small number of students are fully integrated into regular classroom settings (10%).

In most cases "minimal integration" means that intensive resource students are within regular classrooms for short periods of time such as for lunch, or they join a regular education class for a "special" such as music or library. There are, however, intensive resource students who are included in regular classrooms for subject area instruction if it is appropriate for them.

There are several different levels of integration occurring within the intensive resource programs. At one school, students from a self-contained setting for students with severe/profound handicaps are being integrated into a self-contained intensive resource program for students with moderate handicaps. This appears to be working well. The problem teachers are dealing with is a lack of adequate support from special education, mostly in the form of special education aides for the classroom.



**Effectiveness of Integration for Intensive Resource Students.** Principals believe there are benefits to having intensive resource students in regular education settings. Most special education teachers agree. They often see benefits from integrating their students that regular classroom teachers do not readily see, such as development in particular skill areas, improved behavior, and general enthusiasm for learning. Regular classroom teachers are not able to identify progress in these areas since their contact with intensive resource students is often not enough to get to know the student the same way as the intensive resource teacher can by interacting with them on a continual basis.

Principals were asked to list primary strengths of integration for intensive resource students. Results appear in Table 4. Most agree that the primary benefits lie with giving special students the opportunity of **social interactions.** Key factors in the success of integration for intensive resource children, according to principals and educators in our district, are **aide support for the student and the teacher** and **communication of realistic objectives for the student.** Discussions with classroom teachers during site visits also revealed the importance of providing as much background information on the student as possible, including how to handle health related problems, behavior, and specific information regarding how best to instruct them. Without special education training, many regular classroom teachers are hesitant to integrate intensive resource students. Often they are not able to see the value in the integration because they are not sure what kinds of progress to look for and they cannot see where what they do is making a positive difference.

**Class size** can be a factor in whether or not integration for an intensive resource child can occur, especially for wheelchair children. The logistics of moving a child around in a room that is already crowded is a problem for classroom teachers unless an aide is dedicated to the special needs child. Another concern is that the integrated intensive resource children do not always become socially accepted and included in regular classroom settings. All participants who talked to us about integrating intensive resource students believe there is a positive effect on regular education students in that they learn about handicaps and they grow in understanding about differences in people.

**Integrating Other Special Education Programs.** Other special programs exist in the district, such as a fully integrated Deaf Education program at Barnette Elementary School and preschool programs for children who are developmentally delayed or have speech and language needs. The Deaf Education program appears successful for the deaf and hearing impaired students. Regarding the regular education students who are integrated into that class, all but one student from the previous year remained in the program for the 1992-93 school year.

Preschoolers with special needs remain, for the most part, in self-contained settings with limited integration into regular Kindergarten classrooms. However, all preschool teachers whom we interviewed feel very strongly that these children would benefit greatly from integrated programs where other preschoolers can be role models for speech, language, and appropriate behavior. This is very difficult to accomplish since the district does not have preschool programs for non-handicapped children between the ages of three and five. One type of integration occurring in two elementary schools (1992-93 school year) is the occasional integration of developmentally delayed preschoolers into the speech/language preschool program.

# SECTION IV

# INTEGRATING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Our district receives funding from the federal and state governments to provide services under four major programs. Categorical students are served through entitlement grants in Chapter I, Chapter I-Migrant, and the Alaska Native Education program. State and foundation funds are allocated for the Bilingual/Bicultural program. The term "categorical" is used because students must meet specific criteria to be served in any of these program categories. These are what the district calls "Special Programs" and the following discussion focuses on the integration of services for students in these programs. Students can qualify to receive services through more than one program. For example, a student who is served in the Chapter I program may also be served by Alaska Native Education. Table 2 of this report provided some information on the number of students who receive services in more than one program.

One area of concern which led the district to look toward keeping students in the classroom for special services was that some students were being pulled out of their regular classroom several times a week (and sometimes several times a day) for instruction through special programs. Often the instruction received in these "pull-out" special programs was inconsistent with the content and topics being covered in the regular classroom. The special programs set goals for the students and worked hard to achieve the goals, but the fragmentation of a child's education due to being pulled from the classroom too often, sometimes in different directions. One solution was to integrate the services. This meant that instead of having students come to the program, the program would come to the students. Under the integration model, students in various special programs are still served by the staff from the program(s), but when the services are integrated into the regular classroom setting, instruction occurs with the collaboration of the regular classroom teacher.

This change in the organization and delivery of instruction had several important implications for both the special programs staff and for the regular classroom teachers. Data we collected during the course of the project highlighted several advantages and disadvantages to the integrated model of program service delivery.

The next sections of this report focus on issues related specifically to individual special "categorical" programs.

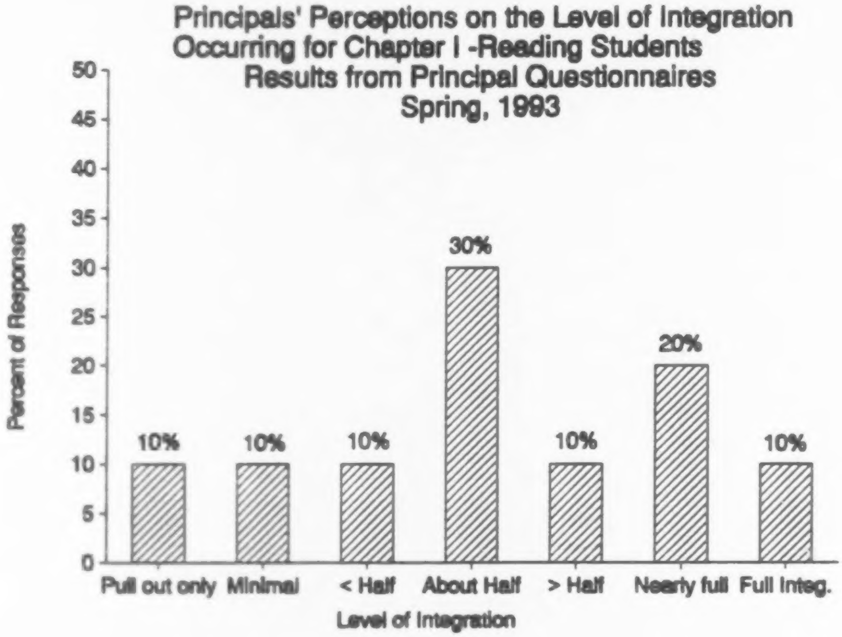
## Program Integration: Chapter I-Reading

The Chapter I program began as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, originally enacted through Public Law 89-10 in 1965. The program proposed by this legislation involved a wide and direct involvement in public education. The program was designed to "provide supplemental educational and related services to educationally disadvantaged children who attend schools serving low-income areas." *Educationally disadvantaged* means those students who are functioning below grade level and who attend a school with a proportionally high number of low income students. Major revisions to Title I have occurred since 1965, especially during the 1970's which limited the ways funds could be used. The program was revised again in 1981 under the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act at which time the program was renamed Chapter I (Chapter I Reading/Math Assistant Handbook, August, 1993).

In our district, the Chapter I reading program provides supplemental reading instruction for first through fourth grade elementary students in eight elementary schools and to qualifying ninth graders at Lathrop. Schools are selected as Chapter I sites based on socioeconomic level measured by the number of students in given areas who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. Chapter I students are selected at these schools based on academic need. Chapter I services are provided by trained reading assistants and/or certified teachers. The primary objective of the program is to help students become more successful in school by strengthening their reading and associated academic skills. The program has experienced success with students in developing and increasing skills such that they may successfully return to the regular classroom because they no longer require the service. Most Chapter I students are exited from the program after just one or two years of special reading assistance.

**Extent of Integration for Chapter I Program.** Chapter I staff members completed surveys as part of the research study on integration in April of 1993. Inquiry into the extent to which integration was taking place in Chapter I schools was made during this time. Results from Chapter I reading staff show that, due in large part to teacher preference or to a specific Chapter I program model, about half of the students are being served using integrated models of service delivery and half are served in pull-out settings. Hunter and Barnette Elementary schools have both a Chapter I certified teacher and a reading assistant.

Building principals reported more integration activity in Chapter I programs than was actually occurring. The bar chart below represents responses from principal questionnaires regarding the extent of integration for students in the Chapter I program.


Principals' Perceptions on the Level of Integration Occurring for Chapter I -Reading Students
Results from Principal Questionnaires
Spring, 1993

The integration of services for Chapter I students looks different at each school: some students receive fully integrated services, some are pulled out of the classroom for services, and some receive instruction in a combination of settings. At two schools with certified teachers, students from primary grades come to the Chapter I staff for instruction during language arts time, thus lowering the PTR in the regular classroom. This type of integration is founded on the benefits of coordinating services and curriculum alignment so that students maintain consistency in content and curriculum while still targeting specific skills and areas of need in a small group setting. While the benefits of this type of restructuring for language arts includes individual attention and small group participation, some proponents of integration have questioned the "tracking" of these students into homogeneous groupings rather than using heterogeneous models which focus on cooperative learning and role modeling. On the other hand, pulling small groups of Chapter I students for intensive, small group and individual instruction has resulted in measurable success for students. Unlike many learning disabled students who must learn strategies in order to compensate for a lifelong learning problem, many Chapter I students are able to catch up with their on-grade level peers and return to regular classroom settings. Pulling them as a homogeneous group has been shown to be effective for these students.

One way to gauge the effectiveness of the Chapter I service delivery model being used is through program evaluations which look at the progress and exit rates for students in the program. The annual Chapter I evaluation completed for the State of Alaska Department of Education in September of 1993 showed overall gains as a district, although some students did not make their expected gains. A recent analysis of student progress in Chapter I based upon the setting in which they received services was recently completed. Preliminary results indicate that, as a group, those students who received extra reading instruction in a combination of settings (sometimes integrated, other times pulled) achieved reading gains higher than the group who was fully integrated or the group who was exclusively pulled out. However, conclusions cannot be made that combining methods of service delivery is best for all Chapter I students. Our study has already found that integration is a teacher-dependent model, and the success shown for students may be attributable to staff characteristics and the quality of working relationships rather than to the settings in which services are delivered. There are instances occurring where program effectiveness would be higher is students could be pulled for intensive, small group instruction. Further investigations into placement settings for Chapter I students are needed as we continue to seek a balance in meeting student needs through the Chapter I program. Another indicator of program effectiveness is the rate at which students exit the program, an indication that the supplemental special service is no longer required for school success. Should an evaluation be conducted on the effectiveness of placement on student performance, this component would need to be included.

**Summary of Survey Results from Chapter I Staff.** Two Chapter I teachers and 14 reading assistants completed surveys in April, 1993. Table 5 shows that key factors in successfully integrating services for students lie with **adequate planning time and open communication.** Classroom teachers were given increased responsibility for providing lesson plans to special programs staff and communicating with them regarding goals, curricular content, materials, and objectives. The Chapter I staff no longer operates in isolation of the activities of the regular classroom, although they may still choose the materials to work on specific skill areas with students. Most, if not all, reading assistants work within the classroom curriculum, if not within the actual classroom, to deliver services to Chapter I students.

Chapter I reading assistants were asked whether they believe integration works better for some of their students than others. Some reading assistants believe that integration benefits most:

- **students who do not want to leave their classroom;**
- **students who are not too far behind;**
- **students who are in multiple programs which would require them to be out of the classroom too often.**

According to Chapter I reading staff, students who benefit least from receiving services in an integrated setting are those who:

- **are highly distractible;**
- **have particular learning styles requiring different approaches and strategies;**
- **respond more and better in quiet, small group settings.**

As a group, the majority of the Chapter I reading assistants in 1992-93 believe that students benefit more from a pull-out model, although some students do well in the integrated setting. Table 14 lists their responses.

A crosstabulation with Chi square analysis which looks at the length of time employed in Chapter I and the extent to which staff members feel integration is meeting program goals is significant and points to an interesting result: the longer the Chapter I reading assistant has been providing services to children, the less likely they are to perceive that integration is meeting program goals because they feel more confident in prescribed activities. Conversely, Chapter I personnel hired within the past year are more favorable about student outcomes with the integrated model. It could be that new-hires are more open to new ideas or are unfamiliar with the success of the program in the past, and are hired on with the expectation that they will be integrating their services, so they have not been required to make a change in their service delivery. The significant differences in responses between new hires and employees of longer tenure could be due to resistance to change, especially when in general, their survey responses indicate they are unconvinced that moving toward integration is better than, or as good as, the supplemental instruction they were able to give to students in a pull-out setting.

Chapter I reading assistants hold a range of opinions regarding the effectiveness of integrating Chapter I services. As seen in their responses in Table 14, attitudes differ regarding the children themselves and regarding how best to serve them. The responses also point to the fact that all Chapter I students are not alike. Based upon their individual characteristics and needs, no doubt some Chapter I students will do well within integrated settings. Others will do better with individualized, small group direct instruction.

The survey asked respondents to state specific things that would help them in their efforts to provide services to students in integrated classroom settings. Responses reiterated the need for **planning time, teacher training, clear communication of the mission and goals of the Chapter I program, and working out a better schedule.**

Chapter I service providers were asked to describe how their role had changed since the district moved toward an integrated model of service delivery. For some, the role has changed very little, as indicated by the comment, "My role hasn't changed much, because before [integration] I planned with the teachers on my own time and their's." For others, the impact has been more noticeable. "I'm less effective with students in an integrated team teaching situation. Consequently, the children don't benefit as much. We just don't make the same impact as we do in small group instruction."

The Chapter I program is intended to provide **supplemental** reading instruction to students who meet the criteria for needing special help through this program. Discussions are continuing regarding the meaning and interpretation of the term "supplemental."

Table 14

Responses on the Benefits of Integration for Chapter I Students

| Respondent | Percent of Chapter I students who are seen as benefitting more from integration than from pull-out | Percent of Chapter I students who are seen as benefitting more from pull-out than from integration |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 65%<br>"students don't know they have been identified as a little behind" | 35%<br>"in an integrated setting, special problems never get special attention" |
| 2 | 70%<br>"students feel very comfortable in their own classrooms" | 30%<br>"they need more individualized attention when it comes to more specific areas"<br>and<br>"easily distracted students benefit the least" |
| 3 | 10%<br>"They don't like being singled out" | 90%<br>"They like the smaller groups because it's much quieter and they get lots more individual attention. They like the one on one. It helps to build self-esteem." |
| 4 | 40%<br>"These students want to stay tuned to the class activities." | 60%<br>"These students crave more individual recognition and need more one on one instruction." |
| 5 | 10%<br>"Students involved in multi-service deliveries benefit most." | 90%<br>"Students needing new environments, small group, individual instruction." |
| 6 | 50%<br>"When they do big projects in the classroom, it's not fair to pull them out." | 50%<br>"More individual attention. The really low, low students benefit least from integration." |
| 7 | 100%<br>"If they are in a positive environment that does not separate them because of lower reading ability." | |

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Table 14 (continued)

Responses on the Benefits of Integration for Chapter I Students

| Respondent | Percent of Chapter I students who are seen as benefitting more from integration than from pull-out | Percent of Chapter I students who are seen as benefitting more from pull-out than from integration |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | 75%<br>"Less danger of lower expectations, less time lost in transition, better chance of succeeding in home room and being included." | 25%<br>"Needs or learning styles benefit from smaller physical setting, quieter atmosphere, more one to one feedback, removal from personality conflicts with other students, or they can't function in own classroom without intensive training or private instruction. |
| 9 | 90% | 10%<br>"The students who least benefit from an integrated program are kids who work well in small groups." |
| 10 | 10% | 90%<br>"Many Chapter I students are very distractible." |
| 11 | 5%<br>"Because the classroom teacher does not want coordination of services for pull-out." | 95%<br>"I work hard to coordinate services and goals with teachers to enhance and individualize learning." |
| 12 | 25%<br>"Some children just need a little boost. If they receive some support from Chapter I, they can do just fine." | 75%<br>"Children need more intensive treatment of lessons given in class. Hit it and go on lessons does not stick with these children." |
| 13 | no percent given<br>"Older students (grades 5 and 6) benefit more from being with their class." | no percent given<br>"Primary students love the pull-out because of the special attention they receive." |
| 14 | no percent given<br>"Older children benefit most." | no percent given<br>"Younger students benefit least." |

## Program Integration: Chapter I - Migrant

The Chapter I-Migrant program is "an educational program funded by the U.S. Government. It was originally created in 1966 to help children whose schooling was interrupted because their families moved often" (Alaska Department of Education publication, undated). Even though the program is funded by the federal government, it is the state's responsibility, through individual school districts, to administer the Migrant Education program.

The Chapter I Migrant Education program provides a variety of services: tutoring and counseling services to elementary students, study skills classes for middle school students, and tutoring and access to the Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) correspondence program for secondary students. A student qualifies for the migrant education program if the child moved or traveled with one or both parents or a guardian during the past six years to participate in a qualifying activity such as subsistence fishing, farming, or timbering. One of the stated program assurances is that programs will be coordinated with regular education, special education, and other special programs in which the student may be enrolled. School sites are chosen based on the largest number of migrant students, although most program options are available to all migrant students.

Students in the Chapter I-Migrant Education Program are integrated into regular classroom settings for basically all of their school day. Additional tutorial services are provided for students on an as needed basis, but this is supplemental to the daily instruction time the child receives in the regular classroom. Counseling services are provided with the intent to improve academic performance. Study skills classes are offered for middle school migrant students to improve academic achievement. These classes are open to both migrant and non-migrant students, with class size at 10-12 students. High school students are tutored in order to complete credits toward graduation, but again, this occurs outside of school hours. Migrant education students at all grade levels are educated in fully integrated settings.

During our interviews with school staff, the counselor we spoke with who serves migrant education students feels that the full integration is working very well. The key to this success is frequent communication with the classroom teacher so that additional assistance (academic or counseling) can be provided as soon as a need has been identified. He told us, "With the migrant kids, we try not to lose ground. We use teacher reports and teacher requests to track the program. The less they miss, the better."

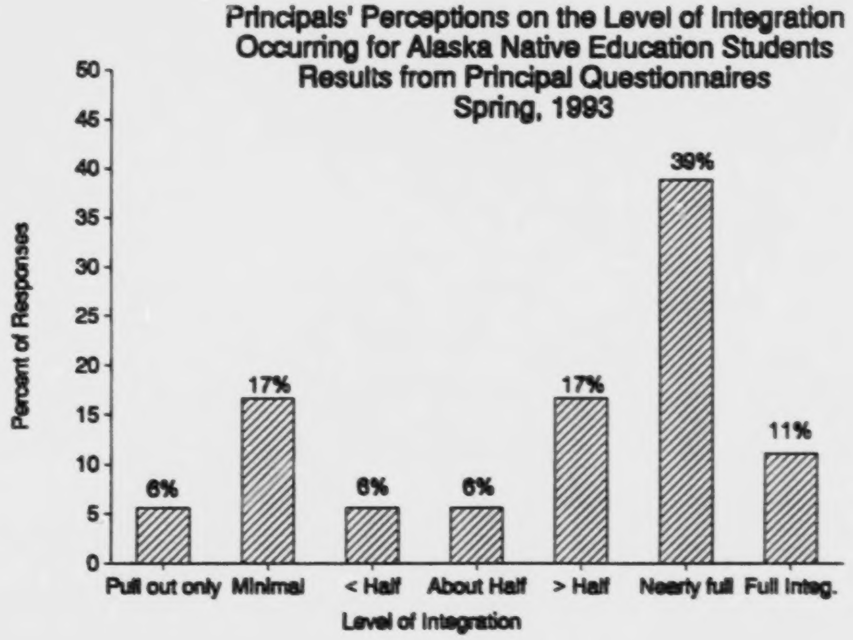
Counselors did not complete a survey regarding integrated services because migrant students are, and will continue to be, fully integrated, with opportunities provided for individual tutorial instruction and parent workshops.

## Program Integration: Alaska Native Education

The Alaska Native Education (ANE) program "aims to improve overall academic performance of Native students and enhance each student's appreciation for their cultural history. The ANE program combines assistance in academic, social and cultural areas to Alaska Native students" (Special Services Annual Report, May, 1992). The Alaska Native Education program is funded through Indian Education Act (IEA) grants. The Indian Education Act became law in June of 1972 and was most recently amended in 1988 as Public Law 100-297. According to information contained in a Parent Briefing on the Indian Education Act (on file in the Alaska Native Education Department), the act provides federal funds for "the special educational and culturally related academic needs" of Native American and Alaska Native children. The ANE program is supplemental, and the IEA states that services to students must be provided in addition to all other available district, state, and federal programs. The Indian Education Act specifies that project funds can **only** benefit Native students. With these federal guidelines in place, it is no wonder that ANE program staff are concerned about the extent to which providing services using an integrated model is meeting the goals of the program as outlined by the IEA.

The ANE program is broader in scope than the other special programs such as Chapter I or Bilingual/Bicultural because of the requirement to include cultural heritage and parental components. For the purposes of this study, we examined the ways in which direct services are provided to students in academic areas since we are looking at the issue of integration of services for these students. According to the ANE program coordinator, the integration service delivery model allows ANE staff the ability to provide general academic assistance to a larger number of targeted students, can reinforce the importance of regular attendance, and allows ANE staff persons to be positive Native role models. The ANE program coordinator believes that ANE staff and parents understand the mission of addressing multiple student needs in academic assistance activities. However, there appears to be a general lack of understanding on the part of some teachers regarding the scope of ANE's program goals and the ways in which the integration model should be adapted to meet the needs of students in the program. The perception from the ANE coordinator confirms this study's findings gleaned from other district sources -- there is an absence of a clear, workable integration model which all parties fully understand and support.

**Survey Results from ANE Staff.** Ten staff members from the Alaska Native Education program completed surveys for the integration study (a response rate of about 70%). The ANE program has been integrating services for several years. According to information gathered from ANE program staff, close to half of all students who qualify for services through the program were either fully or partially served in regular classroom settings during the 1992-93 school year. Results from principal questionnaires indicate the reported level of integration at nearly 100%. Principals' responses regarding integration of the ANE program are represented in the bar chart below.



The decision to integrate services for Alaska Native students is left largely to the classroom teacher. If the teacher is in favor of integrating services for students in the ANE program, then the ANE staff member assists students within the regular classroom setting. If another teacher prefers that the student(s) be pulled out of the classroom for services, then the ANE staff member accommodates this preference. It is not always clear whether the decision to integrate or not is based upon student needs or based on the preference of classroom teachers. Table 15 on the following page summarizes responses of the Alaska Native Education staff to the issue of whether some students benefit more from integration than others. There is not total agreement among ANE staff about this issue, but in general, those who stand to benefit benefit most from integration are students who:

- **do not want to be singled out;**
- **are outgoing, confident, have healthy self-esteem;**
- **are doing well academically.**

Table 15

Responses on the Benefits of Integration for Alaska Native Education Students

| Respondent | Percent of ANE students who are seen as benefitting more from integration than from pull-out | Percent of ANE students who are seen as benefitting more from pull-out than from integration |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | no percent given<br>"Students who don't usually raise their hand in front of the class will come up to me and ask questions. Sometimes, though, I spend too much time with one student that I can't get to see the others who might need help too." | no percent given |
| 2 | 10%<br>"The out-going, non-Native students benefit more because they are more open to ask for help rather than the shy Native students." | 90% |
| 3 | 50%<br>"Some students don't want to be singled out as 'Native' students." | 50%<br>"Some students learn more in small groups where they need step by step directions and more individualized instruction." |
| 4 | 0% | 100%<br>"At [school name] they do better when they are pulled out. Same at [school name]." |
| 5 | 25%<br>"Students who are doing well academically." | 75%<br>"They have special personal concerns." |
| 6 | no percent given<br>"The ones with good self-esteem, feed good about who they are, benefit more. The ones who recognize the opportunity to academically improve."<br>"When they do big projects in the classroom, it's not fair to pull them out." | no percent given |
| 7 | 10%<br>"Those that want to be successful and just need a little more one on one. There is a time factor in that I reach fewer students. Integration only works if the student wants the help and is motivated." | 90%<br>"One on one, I find that students are more open to share problems in class or outside of class." |
| 8 | no percent given<br>"The Native students who benefit most are the students who are proud of who they are. They accept themselves as Native Americans." | |

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Table 15 (continued)

Responses on the Benefits of Integration for Alaska Native Education Students

| Respondent | Percent of ANE students who are seen as benefitting more from integration than from pull-out | Percent of ANE students who are seen as benefitting more from pull-out than from integration |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | 5%<br>no comments included | 95%<br>no comments included |
| 10 | 50% | 50%<br>"Need individual attention." |
| 11 | 20%<br>"The non-Natives get more attention." | 80%<br>no comment included |
| 12 | 60%<br>"They remain on task and get the lesson done rather than struggling when it's being done as a group. | 40%<br>"They do better with one on one instruction." |

ANE staff members were asked to list specific things that would help them in their efforts to provide services in integrated classroom settings. Again the issue of having program staff used as teacher aides surfaced, with the comment, "We are there to help STUDENTS, not to run copies or check papers." As with the classified staff members in Chapter I, ANE staff feel that teacher training in integration and the effective use of paraprofessionals would improve their efforts to serve students in classroom settings. Planning and communication were also mentioned, especially in the area of receiving the teacher's lesson plans and assignments prior to getting to the classroom, rather than showing up at the classroom "cold." There is a general feeling that where integration is not working, it is because the classroom teacher does not appreciate or take advantage of the services that ANE staff members are there to provide to those students in need of attention and assistance. Most ANE staff members indicated on their surveys that they are new to the program and could not specify how their role as a service provider had changed as a result of integrating services. Those who had been with the program stated they do spend time with more students, but less time is being spent with targeted ANE students.

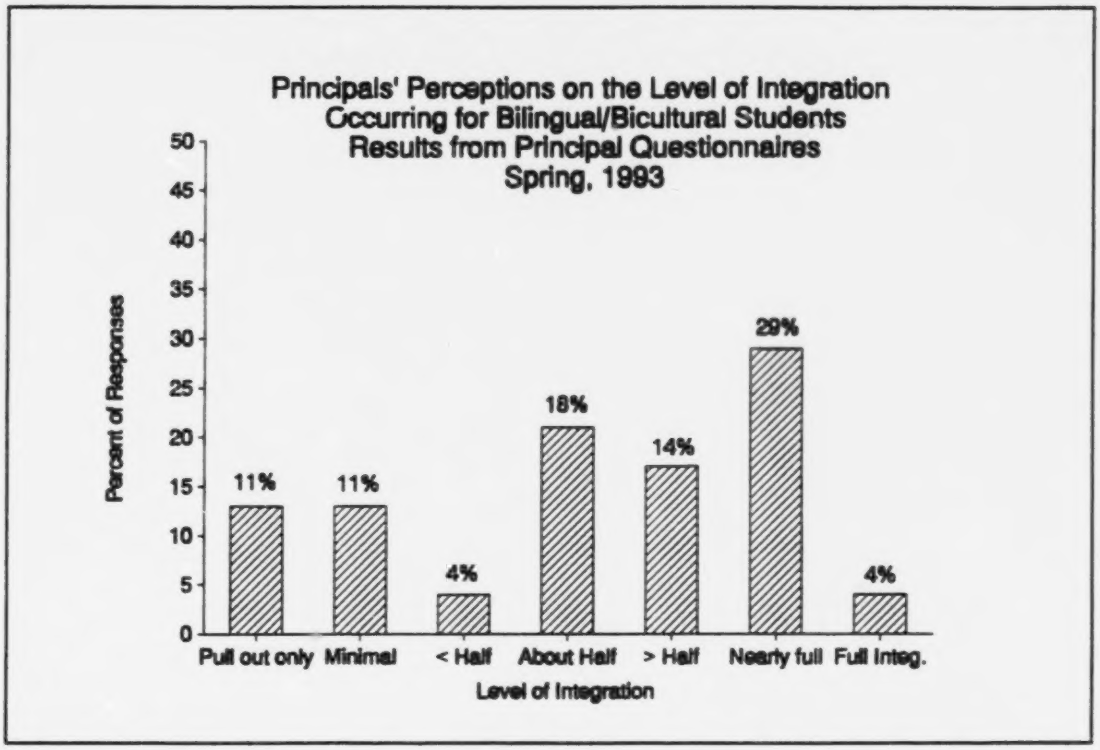
## Program Integration: Bilingual/Bicultural

According to the handbook produced by staff at the Special Programs department, "the Bilingual/Bicultural program was established to service students affected under the language provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This act bans discrimination in employment, in education, in public places, and in voting. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court (in Lau vs. Nichols) ruled that schools have an obligation to provide specialized instruction to students whose limited English proficiency prevents them from full participation in the classroom. The Equal Opportunity Act of 1974 stated that "by failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional program, it is, in fact, denying equal opportunity." Educational agencies were charged with taking appropriate action to overcome language barriers. The school district established the Bilingual/Bicultural program in 1979 to support schools in their efforts to deliver an equal educational opportunity to students who speak a language other than, or in addition to, English.

The Bilingual/Bicultural service providers have been integrating services for about five years. Students in the program use the district's curriculum and learn English as a second language. Like the other special programs, a main objective is to build student confidence and success in school.

Staff members who responded to our survey in April, 1993 indicated that about 70% of their students are served in either fully or partially integrated settings. Students are pulled out of the classroom when they require direct instruction in ESL (English as a Second Language) which might prove disruptive in a regular classroom setting. Results from principal questionnaires regarding the extent of integration for bilingual students can be found on the following page. In general, most principals find the effectiveness of integration for bilingual to be moderately high.

Integration of instruction for bilingual students began during the 1989-90 school year not only in response to the district's plan to begin integration efforts, but out of a class action law suit brought against the district during the 1987-88 school year. The case charged that a bilingual aide who was a certified teacher working in a classified position, was working in a teaching capacity, writing lesson plans and doing other work of a certified teacher, but at the classified



employee wage. The settlement designated the classroom teacher as responsible for developing lesson plans and supervising the instruction of bilingual students. Integrating services seemed a natural way to have this occur. Service providers to bilingual students now assist their students in the regular classroom if the arrangement meets the approval of the classroom teacher. Otherwise, lessons are planned by the teacher and adapted by the bilingual staff member.

Often the bilingual staff member will be in the classroom, but on the fringe of the main classroom. A student may be pulled to the back of the room or other location where their work together in clarification of instructions, translation, or help with interpretation of a concept can occur with minimal disruption to the teacher and other students.

Bilingual students who need specific, intense, one on one instruction are pulled out of the room on a limited basis for instruction. As much as possible, the vehicle for instruction is the content and concepts being taught in regular classroom settings. This curriculum alignment is seen as a large plus for bilingual students. Several years ago the bilingual staff was pulling the student and doing largely isolated lessons.

The major advantage to the integrated service delivery model is that students are not missing what is happening in the regular classroom. Curriculum alignment and adaptations serve to reinforce concepts and content rather than introducing information that is fragmented and discontinuous with the regular classroom program.

This year, the Bilingual/Bicultural program served 382 students across categories A through E. Category A students are those who are very limited English proficient. Category E students are fluent in English as well as having been impacted linguistically by another language in their background. During the 1992-93 school year, Bilingual programs were located in every school except Two Rivers and Salcha, where no bilingual students were enrolled.

**Scheduling** classroom sessions in order to meet the needs of all bilingual students is a challenge to integration. Bilingual staff members are struggling with issues such as their diminished control over the content they can teach and the increased need to be flexible and still be equitable with all the teachers and classrooms and students who need to be served. The table on the following page presents responses from the Bilingual/Bicultural service providers regarding students who, in their perceptions, stand to benefit most and least from integrated services. In general, those students who are not too far behind academically and who have confidence in themselves tend to benefit more. Those who tend to benefit least are those students who are left behind in the classroom setting due to limited English proficiency, such that they need to work with someone who can explain and reinforce concepts.

According to the staff who work with bilingual students, those who stand to benefit most from integration are:

- **students are not too far behind academically;**
- **students who are confident learners;**
- **students who are fairly fluent in English;**
- **students who work well in groups.**

Bilingual/Bicultural service providers agree with the staff of the other special programs that they need more time with teachers in order to integrate successfully. They also named the availability of textbooks and other resource materials that would make the staff more prepared to help students. Also, care should be taken in class grouping so that the student has good role

### Table 16

Responses on the Benefits of Integration for Bilingual/Bicultural Students

| Respondent | Percent of Bilingual students who are seen as benefitting more from integration than from pull-out | Percent of Bilingual students who are seen as benefitting more from pull-out than from integration |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10%<br>"These students are not so far behind academically and require little help when working in groups." | 90%<br>"The material being studied in the classroom is explained in more detail by me. Teachers tell me to work with these students in specific weaknesses they have in academic subjects." |
| 2 | 0% | 100%<br>"Promotes responsibility. They don't depend so much on the tutor. During classes they are solely responsible for doing as much as they can and also of identifying what they can't." |
| 3 | no percent given<br>"The achiever, the confident student." | no percent given |
| 4 | 60%<br>"The categories C through E students." | 40%<br>"The categories A and B students." |
| 5 | 33%<br>"Math is an easy area for bilingual kids but for language arts, I think they benefit from pull-out." | 66%<br>"A larger percentage of the course work is NOT understood than is understood and the extra pull-out help is beneficial." |
| 6 | 66%<br>"For students in Kindergarten, where everything is easy and slow." | 33%<br>"The math is easy for B/B students, and the pull-out for language and other subjects will help the students." |
| 7 | 60%<br>"They are with their peers and feel successful. Classmates see them being successful. Students who benefit the most are those fairly fluent in English and work well in group settings." | 40%<br>"These students need a little more time for explanation and feel more relaxed outside of the classroom where they feel pressured. Those who need one to one explanation of subject matter." |

Table 16 (continued)

Responses on the Benefits of Integration for Bilingual/Bicultural Students

| Respondent | Percent of Bilingual students who are seen as benefitting more from integration than from pull-out | Percent of Bilingual students who are seen as benefitting more from pull-out than from integration |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | 50%<br>"Benefits students who are more well behaved, students that have a goal to be successful. The student sees what goes on in class and what is required of him or her." | 50%<br>"Students is able to keep on task better in pull-out. He or she is not able to do what is "cool" by watching the other students. |
| 9 | 60%<br>Elementary students like to stay in the classroom. | 40%<br>"I have more time to explain the subject." |
| 10 | 40%<br>"Self-confident students need the least help." | 60%<br>"Newly arrived students are most needy." |
| 11 | 10%<br>"Students in grades K-2 benefit most from integration. Students in grades 3-6 benefit least." | 90%<br>"I can focus on the child's language needs and social studies, math, and science concepts." |

models and an appropriate place in the classroom where work can be accomplished in a one on one, quiet setting. Several of the bilingual staff members feel that their work with bilingual students distracts other students who are trying to work, especially if the bilingual student needs more explanation of content or assignments. Bilingual service providers want to feel like a valued resource, not like a classroom aide who is there to make copies, pass out papers, or sharpen pencils. Special programs staff generally feels that training for classroom teachers in the effective use of bilingual paraprofessionals would help.

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**Role changes for special programs service providers.** As far as role changes as a result of integration, survey results indicate that the most content service providers are those who decide, together with the classroom teacher, whether the student would best be served in an integrated or pull-out setting. Our study also found dissatisfaction in the role change, as illustrated by the comment, "My role has changed from helping the student to becoming the teacher's helper." Programs for students should remain programs for students, no matter which service delivery model the district is using. Again, the issue of training in the use of paraprofessionals, teaming, and collaboration, with concrete examples of how to make the arrangement work for students, should be focused upon.

**Commitment to Integrating Special Programs.** One final gauge of the commitment of the special programs staff to integration was in their responses to the survey question, "If the district had not established a goal to provide special services such as [program name] in integrated settings (meaning regular classrooms), would you choose to integrate? Why or why not?" Responses appear for each of the special program staff in Appendix E. Opinions are mixed, although the individual pullout model has more support than the integrated method of service delivery.

The following discussion is based upon results from surveys completed by the staff who work with students in Chapter I, Alaska Native Education, or Bilingual/Bicultural. The first 24 objective questions were categorized into five major areas dealing with delivery of instruction, content, collaboration, student outcomes, and parents. Responses from the three program groups appear in a series of tables in Appendix A for comparative analysis. Each table gives the number and percent of those who responded a certain way. Percentages are based on the number of respondents who answered the question, not on the total number of surveys received.

## RESULTS FROM SURVEYS COMPLETED BY SPECIAL PROGRAMS STAFF

**Delivery of Instruction.** Respondents were asked seven questions regarding the **delivery of instruction** using an integrated model. Results appear in Table 17. The first question asked special programs staff to what extent they agreed with the statement, "I am better able to give students in my program the individual attention they need to improve their skills as a result of integration." More staff disagree that this is the case when attempting to serve students in regular classroom settings, but comments indicate that it really depends on the student and his level of ability to function in the integrated setting by staying on task, not becoming distracted, and not having skills that are so low as to require more skill based instruction than what is provided in the regular classroom setting. Chapter I staff disagreed with the statement most often (10 of the 14 respondents). Half of the bilingual staff feel they are able to provide students enough attention to improve their skills. Question 2 on Table 17 provides part of the reason for the way staff members responded to the first question. Clearly special programs staff have indicated that the integration model results in less direct instruction to their students. But some also recognize the benefits of having the students stay in their rooms if possible. Mostly they point to the positive role models which other students provide, and that they do not miss out on activities going on in the classroom. Responses to question 3 point to another advantage of the integration model, namely that service providers are able to work with more students than those targeted in their program. Eighty percent of staff members in the Chapter I and ANE program indicated this, as did 70% of the bilingual staff. Some of these are no doubt the gray area students who might not otherwise receive extra help through a special program. Comments from the surveys indicate that while it's good to help others in the classroom, the service they are able to give to their identified students has become somewhat "watered down" compared to the more individualized instruction which is possible in a pull-out model.

Having a service provider in the regular classroom lowers the adult-student ratio, but the presence of an extra body does not guarantee that students will learn more or better. It depends on how the extra person is used to help students, their qualifications and experiences that allow teachers to make maximum use of the extra person, and the extent to which the time and commitment is present to communicate both program goals and expectations for classroom performance. In other words, the relationship has to be one of a team effort or the students will not have an opportunity to be as successful in the integrated setting as they could be.

Question 4 has to do with the extent to which **scheduling** is a problem in providing services to students in an integrated setting. The Chapter I staff most often agreed that this is a problem. Students may be spread across three different first grade classrooms, and it is difficult to schedule time in each room, especially when the school is doing language arts at a particular block time. Respondents from each of the special programs commented that they have lots of students to serve and lots of teachers to work with. One solution is to pull students from two of the classes into one for services, and serve the Chapter I students together in a small group. Some argue that this then becomes an in-class pull-out, with the Chapter I staff using materials more suited for the level of their students, but different from materials being used by the other students. The emphasis on curricular alignment over the past few years would at least assuage the issue of fragmentation since the content would be along a theme consistent with the other students.

Entitlement grants such as Chapter I are intended to be supplemental in nature, providing students with an "extra dose" of instruction in a subject area such as reading. The next question asked staff members if they felt the service they provide in integrated settings supplements, and does not replace, the instruction they receive from the classroom teacher. Most respondents agree that what they give children does supplement the regular classroom instruction. Two Chapter I staff members feel that when they go into a regular classroom during language arts time, they provide reading instruction instead of having the teacher provide it, thus the instructional time is not supplemental in nature, but the small group size is. It's not a double dose if reading instruction is only happening once for the child, but the instruction they receive is reportedly more intense. Two ANE and four bilingual staff members also feel they are not supplementing the regular instruction with the integrated model.

Chapter I service providers indicate they are happy with the **training** received for providing services in regular classroom settings. Records show that training in the integration model occurred extensively during the 1989-90 and 1990-91 school years. Three of the service providers who are new to the program expressed that training in integration had not met their needs. ANE staff members were nearly evenly split in satisfaction with the training they have received. It should be noted that more than half of the ANE staff who responded to the survey have served in the program for less than one year. Bilingual staff feel adequately trained, again with the exception of staff members who came on board after the bulk of training in integration had already occurred. The district must consider personnel turnover rates and the need for continuing training in areas like integration which impact students and staff.

More than half of service providers in the bilingual and ANE programs say they "support the district's efforts toward the integration of services for student in special programs, where students are served in the regular classroom setting." However, results from the Chapter I staff show that more than half do not support integration for their program, but this result should not be taken to mean the staff is against the integration model. The full scope of our data indicates that they support integration for those students whose needs can be met in the classroom, but do not want integration exclusively. The pull-out model remains a viable option for service delivery for some students in special programs. These results point to support for keeping the availability of both placement settings, with flexibility in deciding how and where student needs will be best met. Often students benefit from a combination of integration and pull-out as their skills become stronger and they progress closer to their goal to increase their ability to be successful in the regular classroom setting.

**Content and Materials.** Four questions from the survey asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements referring content and materials. Results appear in Table 18 in Appendix A.

The first statement was, "The content I cover with the students in my program is similar to the content being covered in the regular classroom." Nearly 80% of service providers across the three program areas agreed that this is so. This result indicates a congruency in content taught, even in classrooms .where students are pulled for instruction, since we know from previous results that about 50% of service for students are integrated across the district. This curriculum alignment and coordination of efforts, while more time consuming for teachers to accomplish and requiring more planning, has been a clear benefit to students in special programs. Concepts are reinforced that enhance the learning taking place in the regular classroom. But consistency in concepts does not guarantee acquisition of specific skills in integrated settings and this is the issue of particular concern to Chapter I service providers. Bilingual students can enhance general language skills in classroom settings unless they are very limited English speaking. Alaska Native Education students can improve their academic progress, sometimes, by remaining in a regular classroom setting with support from an ANE liaison.

Question 2 on Table 18 shows responses to the statement, "The materials I use with students in my program are similar to materials used in the regular classroom." Agreement is shown across the three programs, with respondents strongly indicating their use of materials that are either being adapted for students or reinforced through other efforts.

Interestingly, special programs staff don't necessarily attribute the consistency in content to integration. Comments from the surveys indicate that some service providers already had close working relationships with the teachers in their building, and communication more than integration is what makes for consistency.

Integrating special services into the regular classroom was supposed to reduce the negative effects of **multiple services** provided to students served by more than one program. It was not the intent reduce services to students who qualify to receive them. Question 4 asked the special programs staff to respond to the statement, "Integration has resulted in less duplication of services for those students who qualify to receive services through more than one program" The Chapter I staff expressed the highest level of agreement (77%) that duplication of services had been reduced. The staff from Alaska Native Education tended to disagree (67% disagreed) and the bilingual staff was equally split, possibly because they see the service they provide to non-English speakers as not being duplicated through any other special program. A similar situation could be occurring with the Alaska Native Education staff, where program goals are more than achievement in academic areas. Cultural and parental issues are strongly emphasized in this particular grant, and duplication of services is not necessarily relevant to these areas.

**Collaboration.** One of the features of using an integrated model is the increased importance placed on collaboration. Classroom teachers and service providers need to communicate and form a working partnership in order for students to fully benefit from integrated services. Three questions were asked of special programs staff which dealt with collaboration. Question 1 on Table 19 presents responses for the statement, "I am comfortable working in classroom settings to serve students who qualify to receive program instruction." Results show that most of our service providers in special programs do feel comfortable in the classroom settings, feel that most teachers with whom they are integrating are receptive to having them come into their classrooms. In general, most special programs staff feel that integration has resulted in better communication with classroom teachers. There are some staff in each program area who disagree with these issues regarding collaboration. Analysis of responses to open ended questions indicates that the degree to which successful collaboration occurs is based upon teacher characteristics such as WILLINGNESS to plan and communicate with specialists, TIME to plan and communicate with specialists, and basic teaching styles, personalities, and expectations. In this way, the integration model is a teacher-dependent model in that teachers need to see value in this method of service delivery and how the model benefits students. Some classroom teachers prefer the pull-out model, and the classified staff hired to deliver services through special programs work within this framework, leaving the decision to integrate largely to classroom teachers.

**Student Needs/Outcomes**. Seven questions had to do with student needs and student outcomes, since these are the primary reasons for having special programs in the first place. Results appear in Table 20. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, "The decision to integrate [program] students into regular classrooms for services is made based upon student needs." The majority of respondents agree, some strongly so, that this is the case. The most disagreement lies with 5 of the 15 Chapter I respondents, who state that the decision to integrate is based upon teacher preference rather than student needs. The next statement read, "Serving [program] students in an integrated regular classroom setting allows me to accomplish the goals of my program effectively." Responses to this statement is particularly important since each of these programs is goal driven for targeted students for which the district receives money. We need to look at the relationship between consistency in content (higher with integration), teacher receptivity (which most special program staff agree exists with integration) and the ability to meet program goals for students. We also need to look at relationships in responses regarding the delivery of instruction with the integration model, where respondents tell us there is less direct instruction, less time to give targeted students individual attention, problems with scheduling, and the overall level of support for the district's efforts to integrate (higher with ANE and Bilingual than with Chapter I).

A closer analysis should be completed regarding reasons for the differences in program responses. The particular goals of each program should be reviewed as to the extent to which special programs staff are able to deliver the instruction to students in their program, and the extent to which program staff feel they are accomplishing the goals of the program.

**Staff perceptions regarding accomplishment of program goals.** We know there are benefits to having students remain in their regular classroom for special services in that they are not missing what is happening in their classroom, they are working on the same content, and they are receiving some help from their program service provider. However, when we look at academic achievement, survey results indicate service providers believe students may not be accomplishing as much with the integration model as they would with small group or one on one instruction (see Table 20 in Appendix A). About 80% of Chapter I service providers responded that students do not demonstrate a higher level of achievement, as did 75% of bilingual and 50% of ANE program staff. This result is consistent with the responses regarding the achievement of program goals.

**Self-esteem.** Educators know that a child's self-esteem, or feelings about themselves and what they can do, is a critical factor in all aspects of a child's life, including their learning. The survey asked service providers to agree or disagree with the statement, "Serving students in integrated classroom settings affects the self-esteem of students in a positive way." More than half of our respondents (58%) agree that serving students in the classroom has a positive effect on their self- esteem. Bilingual service providers tended to not think so, with 7 people disagreeing with the statement. Although integration is perceived to have a positive effect on self-esteem for just over half, respondents from the Chapter I and Bilingual programs do feel students for the most part are comfortable receiving services in the regular classroom setting. Comments from open ended questions indicate that this really depends on the child, the classroom teacher, and the overall classroom atmosphere. Results indicate that the comfort level is less for Native students served by ANE staff, where one third of service providers strongly disagreed that students are comfortable.

**Choices for students.** The survey asked special program staff if students are given a choice of regular classroom setting or pull-out for their instruction. All Chapter I staff disagreed that students are given a choice. Rather, the decision is left up to teachers. It should be noted that the majority of Chapter I students are in the primary grades. Students served through ANE span the grade levels from K-12, and survey results indicate that most are not given a choice, even at the secondary school level. According to service providers, student feedback regarding service in regular classrooms has been positive for most. Students in the Alaska Native education program have been least likely to give positive feedback regarding this issue. The scattered results indicate a need to keep in mind the particular student needs when considering the best way to serve students.

**Parent involvement.** The last set of questions relates to parents. Question 1 on Table 21 asked respondents to respond to the statement, "Parents are given a choice of whether to have their child receive [program] services in a pull-out program or in an integrated classroom setting." Results indicate that most Chapter I or ANE services are provided either in a fully integrated, partially integrated, or pull-out setting without parental choice, with the exception of bilingual staff where 70% said that parents are given a choice.

But no matter what the setting, most parents of Chapter I and bilingual students are notified regarding the setting in which their students will be served. Nearly all ANE service providers indicate that parents are not notified of the setting for services (90%). It appears from the data we collected that those parents who have given feedback have been pleased with services in all three programs. Again, this is dependent on whether or not parents feel the program is meeting the needs of their children. Where parent feedback has not been positive, it is important to find out why and to make adjustments for those children where necessary. The district must be open to those instances where children may need a setting other than the regular classroom rather than respond that integration is a district mandate so services must be provided in regular classrooms no matter what.

Service providers in special programs were asked to respond to a question of what they perceive to be the overall effectiveness of their program when it is delivered in an integrated model. Results appear in Table 22. Out of 14 employees of the Chapter I program, 10 (or 71%)

think that services they can provide in an integrated setting are less effective than a pull-out model. Comments from surveys indicate that they are unable to provide concentrated, direct instruction to Chapter I students when they are busy helping other students or circulating around the room like a classroom aide. This type of misuse of special program staff could be due to a lack of training for classroom teachers on effective ways to use the help of paraprofessionals to meet student needs in classroom settings. Part is a lack of planning time, where the teacher and Chapter I staff have not collaborated on the lesson, content, materials, goals, or method of delivery. One observation of integrating Chapter I had the reading assistant working with a small heterogeneous group within the classroom, then rotating the small groups so that all students came to the Chapter I reading assistant, not just Chapter I students. While this is a wonderful example of integration and cooperative planning, it still does not mean that the specific needs of Chapter I students were being targeted since time was being spent with all of the children over the one hour period of time that would have otherwise been dedicated to remedial reading instruction for Chapter I students. However, it did lower the PTR for the classroom teacher so that she also could work with the Chapter I students in her small group for part of the instructional time.

**Perceptions of special programs staff regarding effectiveness.** About half of the educators from the Alaska Native Education program indicated they believe the integrated model is just as effective as pull-out, with one indicating integration is **more** effective and five others indicating integration is **less** effective for their students. One in-class observation we made showed an ANE staff member in the role of a classroom aide, helping any children who seemed to need it in addition to ANE students. Four of 12 bilingual educators feel integrated services are just as effective, and 8 of the 12 feel services are less effective in an integrated classroom setting. Again, many of the comments we received said it depends on the student, including their level of academic and social functioning, their personality, their need for a quiet place, and how they interact with others in the classroom environment, to name some of the issues which need to be considered for each child as an individual.

One measure of success with any special program is the rate at which students exit in order to return full to the regular classroom setting with the skills to function successfully there. We asked educators in the Chapter I and Bilingual programs if they thought the students were exiting at about the same rate as before the integration model was adopted. Results appear in Table 23.

For Chapter I students, 42% of our reading assistants told us that students are exiting at a slower rate, 17% said students are exiting at about the same rate, and 42% say they were not involved in the program when a strictly pull-out model was used. Nearly half of the bilingual staff say they were not involved in the program when a pull-out model was the prime method of service delivery, but three think students are now exiting at a higher rate, two think it's a slower rate, and one feels the exit rate is about the same as before. Alaska Native Education students do not "exit" their program with a certain criteria, but rather are encouraged to continue their participation. There has been little change in program participation for ANE students that can be attributed to integration.

**Key factors for successful integration of special programs.** Some factors which contribute to a successful integrated program are tangible, like working out a schedule or having a set time in which to plan. Success of integration also depends on the level of congruence in content and materials between the classroom and special program. Adequate staff and the numbers of children to be served also play a part in the extent to which the integrated model can be successfully implemented. Training for teachers in working with paraprofessionals is also a factor, although some program staff and classroom teachers are already working well together. Other factors are intangible, such as the social climate of schools and classrooms, personality characteristics of people involved and how well they mesh, commonalities in beliefs and philosophies, characteristics of the students being served, including the extent to which a support system exists outside of school. Some ANE service providers are satisfied to take the role of classroom aide while others feel that more freedom and autonomy would result in a more quality program for students.

In the eyes of many special program staff members, another "intangible" factor which effects successful integration is the perceived lack of commitment toward integration from the top down, in that adequate staff and resources have not been allocated to do it well.

## Improving Integration of Services for Special Programs

Responses from special program staff regarding strengths and weakness of the integration model appear in tables 25 and 26. Clearly there are several key factors that must be present in order for integration to be a successful placement option for students. Teacher willingness and readiness for the integration model is one factor that surfaced many times throughout the study. Perhaps specific inservicing on working with and teaming with paraprofessionals in the regular classroom setting would be useful, as well as education regarding the goals of each special program (see Table 24). Additionally, planning time with the classroom teacher would greatly improve the consistency and quality of instructional support to students. Where this extra time will come from, especially for special programs staff split between schools and working with several different teachers, is a challenge to be worked out at the building or program level. One way to do this is to provide break aides one or two days each week to free up teachers while students each lunch, time that could be used to plan collaboratively and discuss goals and objectives for students within the context of the subject areas they will be covering. One hour per week for planning may not seem significant, but past experience with providing planning time proves that it can go a long way to create the type of working relationship necessary to meet student needs using the team effort characteristic of the integration model. Even if the most appropriate service delivery setting is a pull-out, this planning time would provide an important link in the student's education with curriculum consistency and shared goals. Regular classroom teachers would be more apt to see the special program staff as part of a team rather than use them as a classroom aide. Special programs staff would feel a part of the team through joint planning and sharing of knowledge and ideas. At the present time the role of service providers is unclear. Planning time would allow familiarity to grow regarding, for example, those cultural aspects of a bilingual student's home life which may carry over and affect classroom performance or the learning style of an ANE student that seems divergent to a classroom teacher.

Planning time alone does not guarantee successful collaborative relationships. Several professionals disclosed in their interview that sometimes personalities just don't mesh. When this happens it may be better to back off rather than force the integration of services. If this sounds like a teacher-driven model in that it depends on personalities, background experience and training, willingness, and personal philosophy, it is, at least at first.

This coming year (1993-94) the district will devote Title VII grant monies to operate a support program for the teaching of limited English proficient students in grades K-3. Project ALASKA (Accelerated Language for Academic Success and Knowledge Acquisition) staff will be working closely with teachers on cross-curricular materials in science and math using whole language instructional methods, particularly effective for limited English proficient students. Working with classroom teachers on strategies, peer coaching, and material development for bilingual students should increase the level of understanding of students from other cultures, thus increasing the comfort level of teachers in working with these students. The result may be increased integration of services for bilingual students as teachers prefer to keep them in the classroom rather than opt for the pull-out setting.

Throughout the school year courses are offered through grant programs that are designed with the classroom teacher in mind. One particularly successful course offered to the staff at migrant education schools is "Teaching for Student Success." Courses like this one offered through district programs provide teachers with the hands-on strategies and information about students that can be useful for teaching all students. The drawback is that space is limited for these courses. Also, because courses and workshops are elective and not mandatory, many teachers (some of whom are not intrinsically motivated to increase their skills) do not become exposed to these new teaching techniques and ideas. This course and others (two related to Project ALASKA) will be offered to teachers through the school district this year.

Another change that may have a positive effect on integration is the combining of part-time positions at a particular school rather than splitting two people between buildings. One of the issues about special programs is the lack of time the special service provider spends in a school because they are "split" between two or three different schools. Being employed in an itinerant position decreases the chances of developing a rapport with other staff members and being available for planning or grade level meetings. Having one person in the building sharing two roles will improve services to students in that they can become more familiar with the staff person and expectations can be more consistent. As one building principal wrote regarding their bilingual service provider, "I feel like many itinerant people don't realize how important they are to our kids and staff. No-show days really impact the program." There are no substitutes hired for classified special programs staff (ANE, Bilinguai, Chapter I).

# SECTION V

# OPINIONS ON INTEGRATION FROM PARENTS

Seventy-one parents of students in special programs were contacted via telephone and were asked questions regarding the integration of special services for their children. Parent names were provided by staff members whom we interviewed during site visits to schools in May, 1993. It was helpful to have familiarity with the schools (from the case study site visits), with regular and special education staff members, principal leadership style, and programs offered within the schools, in gathering information from parents rather than pulling randomly from a special education database. Participation was voluntary.

There are limitations to the extent that information from the parent component can be generalized across the district for two important reasons. First, all parents contacted are from just six of the district's elementary schools. The extent to which integration occurs in other buildings and the degree of satisfaction of parents with programs in the other schools are unknown to us. Second, the parents we contacted are not representative of the numbers of students across all the district's special programs. For example, no parents of students who are served through the Bilingual/Bicultural or Alaska Native Education programs participated in the parent component. Despite these limitations, useful information came out of the parent interviews. The tables on the following pages present content analyses from questions asked to parents of special needs children.

The first question was general in nature and was aimed at gathering opinions regarding the integration model of service delivery. It asked, "What is your opinion about providing special services to students as much as possible in the regular classroom (or, for parents of intensive resource students, with regular education students)? What do you see as strengths? What do you see as weaknesses?"

Parents gave a variety of opinions about integration, but as shown in Table 27 on page 113, the most frequent response was that **integration should occur for their child as much as possible, depending on the child's needs, but pull-out should occur for one on one instruction.** It is interesting that across all the groups who participated in the study (principals, specialists, classroom teachers, and parents), the issue surrounding the provision of special services comes down to providing a balanced approach in meeting student needs. An available range of placement options is critical, from integrated classroom settings to self-contained settings, as long as student needs are the basis for making placement decisions rather than the influence of logistic factors such as caseloads and scheduling.

Some parents named specific strengths and weaknesses with the integration model. The content analyses appear in Tables 28 and 29. The strength mentioned most frequently was that **the student would feel more like a member of the class.** The weakness parents mentioned most often was that **students would not get as much individual attention in an integrated setting as they would in a pull-out setting**. Concern was also expressed regarding classroom teachers who lack training in special education. Many parents did not give specific strengths or weaknesses.

Parents were asked the type of setting in which special services were delivered during the 1992-93 school year. Results appear in Table 30. About 57% of parents say their child was in a primarily pull-out or self-contained setting for services. Nearly 15% say their child received all special services in an integrated classroom setting, and 28% report their child received services in a combination of integrated and pullout settings.

We asked parents how much they felt they had been involved in the decision making process regarding placement settings for their children. Results indicate that a large majority of parents, (83.1%) felt they had been highly involved in making decisions regarding their child's special services. Another 8.5% felt they had been moderately involved and 8.5% felt they had not been very involved in deciding what their child's placement would be.

Table 31 shows responses to a general question concerning whether parents were satisfied with the special services their child was receiving. Results indicate a very high level of satisfaction across the various programs, with 62 of the 71 parents responding that they are satisfied with the special services their child is receiving (83%). And because we know that more than half of the students were served in primarily resource room or self-contained settings, it appears that parents are in support of a setting in which their child can be successful, even if that means a pull-out program.

About 17% of parent respondents said they are not satisfied with the special services their child is receiving. Most of the parents who expressed dissatisfaction cited difficulties in communicating with school staff, personality issues between a child and teacher, or perceived low expectations. The purpose of including a parent component, then, is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of special education programs, but to look for commonalities in responses from administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the extent of integration occurring in the district and the strengths and weaknesses of integration as a model of service delivery.

Parents were asked, "Based on your child's individual needs, would you prefer that he or she remain in the regular classroom to receive special help, or receive service outside of the regular classroom? Do you think it makes a difference to your child which setting he or she is in for special services, either academically or socially?" Responses appear in Table 32.

The most frequent response as to parent preference for service delivery is **the regular classroom with help readily available.** However, most parents do not think that the district's integration program provides special students with help readily available in classroom settings. Principals and teachers agree. Providing a model of service delivery which keeps students in regular classrooms with special help readily available would require a significant increase in the number of certified staff and classroom aides to carry out the goal, as well as more regular classroom teachers with training in both special and regular education. Information from the parent component suggests that parents of special needs children want their children to be normal and want them, as much as possible, in normal environments. But the other side of the coin is that parents will take pull-out and self contained programs if that is where they believe their child's needs can best be met. The general consensus among parents who participated in the study is that integration is a viable option that should be considered for service delivery if there is adequate staffing, training, and if student needs can be met.

## Table 27

### Opinions From Parents Regarding Providing Special Services in Regular Classrooms
August, 1993

| | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH 1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Depends on the child and their needs -- should have regular class as much as possible but pull-out for one on one. | 7 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Need the specialized instruction, can't get in regular classroom/goals not met. | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Prefer regular classroom. | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Regular classroom only if the ratios are low/only if needs can be met. | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Do not put kids in the regular classroom just to integrate. It's not right for everyone. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pull them into a resource room if that's what they need. | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| In resource room child does not feel lost or stupid. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| They would feel more a part of the group when they can stay. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Kids might slip through the cracks. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wonderful idea/theory if it is done correctly and is benefitting the child. | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Should be taken out of class. | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Regular classroom only if teachers have the knowledge and training. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Integrating is too disruptive. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 28

Parent Responses Regarding Strengths of the Integration Model

August, 1993

| | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH 1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reduces peer pressure and embarrassment having to go another class. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Student's needs can be met there. | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| It's good to have extra staff in the classroom. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Student would feel more like a member of the class. | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Good staff. | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Special students are exposed to a normal environment which can be good. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Benefit of the program can spread to other students. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Less stigma/no labels on students. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Good exposure for both special and regular education. | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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## Table 29

### Parent Responses Regarding Weaknesses in Integration Model
### August, 1993

| | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH 1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inadequate level of resources available. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Need smaller class size to do it. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Not as much resource help available to intermediate grades. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Peer pressure when students remain in regular classroom. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parents of regular education students might not want it/may take time away from other students. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Students would not get as much individual attention. | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Harder/more stressful on classroom teacher. | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Regular education teachers who don't have training. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| We falsely rely on mainstreaming to be the answer when it's a waste of time. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Too many distractions. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Too difficult to implement. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

### Table 30
### Parent Responses Regarding the Setting in Which Students Received Special Services During the 1992-93 School Year
### August, 1993

| Setting for Special Services | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH 1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primarily resource or self-contained | 22 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| Combination of resource/self-contained and regular classroom | 9 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Integrated regular classroom only | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| Note: Several parents answered for child who received services in more than one special service area. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Level of Involvement in Placement Decision for Child** | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF | TOTAL |
| Highly involved | 31 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 59 |
| Moderately involved | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Not very involved | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |

### Table 31
### Parent Responses Regarding Satisfaction with Their Student's Special Program, 1992-93 School Year

| Response regarding satisfaction with special services child is receiving | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH 1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 32 | 11 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No | 6 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Note: Several parents gave more than one response when child was enrolled in more than one special program. | | | | | | | | | | |

## Table 32

### Parent Responses Regarding Preference for Type of Setting in Which Child Receives Services - August, 1993

| | LD | CD | GT | MR | EI | OTH | CH 1 | BIL | ANE | DEAF | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student prefers to leave the room for one on one instruction/higher comfort level/uninterrupted instruction. | 6 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| Regular classroom with help readily available. | 16 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| Whichever is best academically for the child. | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Both. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Pulled out so child is not singled out/made fun of. | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Child preferred to be pulled out to receive individual help he needed without interruption. | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Child's needs are unique -- needs to be in separate program part of the day. | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Maximum benefit to child is with the pull-out model. | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| Child would not be able to function in a large class. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

# SECTION VI

# DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In this section, the results presented in the previous sections are used to draw some general conclusions regarding the integration of special services in the regular classroom. The emphasis here is on generating the "lessons learned" from school staff in implementing the integration model.

**Seeking the right balance.** In compliance with providing a full continuum of services to special needs students, integration should be viewed as one option that is considered for delivering services to meet some or all of a student's unique and individual needs. Integration should not be based upon the existence of a particular model or mode of delivery. For the past twenty years, public schools across the nation have, for the most part, kept special education a separate entity from regular education, even though some of the students would have been successful remaining in a regular classroom with extra support. There was an assumption that if a student was having difficulty learning in a regular classroom setting, then a resource setting was the "automatic" appropriate placement. This belief system still exists, although to an increasingly lesser degree, in the minds of some educators in our district. But our data shows that more support for integration would exist with a higher level of support from the school district -- support in the form of training, planning time, and staffing.

Many special educators believe that if a student has made good progress in a pull-out setting, needs the close rapport of the specialist, or has needs so specific in nature that integration is not the most appropriate placement (such as speech articulation problems) then the option not to integrate should be available and respected as the best placement for that student. If the decision to integrate services for students is to be based upon student needs, then neither should the integration option be discarded due to high case loads, lack of planning time, poor collaboration skills, scheduling difficulties, or resistance to change.

**Staff perceptions regarding the district's goal.** Teachers who felt integration had been a mandate were less supportive of the model than teachers who felt they had a choice whether or not to integrate. Many teachers with negative attitudes towards the district's goal felt that integration could be a good thing, but if the district had been committed to making it work, they would have provided more staff, training, and planning time to ensure its success. Staff members who were encouraged (not told) to try various options with integration may not have achieved the same level of integration, but did express greater satisfaction in what they had accomplished.

No specific guidelines were presented as to how to integrate programs, although information about the integration model was readily available to principals and staff. The five-year plan intended to use site-based management to get integration off the ground. Each building was left to design and implement a program based upon staff willingness, strengths, and the needs of their student populations. On the one hand, central office was criticized for "telling us to integrate, but they didn't tell us how" while on the other hand, praised for allowing schools the flexibility to develop their own integration plans. Whether the plans moved forward or not depended on whether or not there were integration "leaders" in the building.

**Integration efforts are influenced by traditional training practices.** For years each of the disciplines (special and regular education) have received different types of training through teacher education programs. Special educators are taught to focus on the individual, to try various means of remediation in individual or small group settings. Regular education teachers are taught to reach the majority of the students in delivering academic content, provide general review and re-teaching or supplementary challenges. Integration asks special educators to shift gears and enter the world of regular education, with larger groups of students and different expectations. Integration asks regular education teachers to increase their knowledge and understanding of disabilities and to adapt materials and instruction to meet the needs of **all** their students. For this to happen, more training and more communication with specialists is required. Partnerships and team teaching approaches ask classroom teachers to relinquish some control over their "domains."

Over the past five years, training opportunities have been provided to special educators and to classified program staff, but has been minimal for regular education teachers who perhaps have been the group most impacted by integration. Administrators in the Special Education Office acknowledge that more training is necessary. An inservice was offered in August, 1993 prior to the beginning of the school year (sponsored by the Special Education Department). This inservice, entitled "Reaching the Hard to Teach", was offered to entire school staffs, not just special educators. Results compiled from inservice evaluation forms indicate a high level of interest in the areas of adapting instruction for special learners and in learning strategies for teaching "at-risk" children, including children in special programs. In fact, for some regular education teachers, this may have been the first inservice that addressed how to interact with special needs children. Comments from these inservice evaluations indicate a desire for more ideas and practical suggestions for effective classroom teaching practices in the area of special needs students. These types of collaborative training opportunities help to create a partnership between regular education and special education that are likely to promote integration efforts.

Training alone will not solve the problems we see with integrating special services. Caseloads and scheduling must still be addressed. Those things that teachers say they need to integrate services cost a lot of money. The model is highly dependent on attitudes and beliefs, personalities and teaching styles. The integration model must work for staff before it can work for students.

**Self-esteem.** In looking at the data collected as a result of this study, few principals or teachers targeted the "effect on a student's self-esteem" as a major concern in choosing pull-out versus integration. Nearly all teachers said that as long as a child is successful, special services will benefit their self-esteem. Sometimes students can find success in their regular classroom with special services delivered to them, other times an alternative setting will provide a more successful environment. Teachers who commented about self-esteem believe it becomes more of an issue for students at intermediate grade levels, middle schools, and high schools than at primary grade levels. Again, it depends on the individual child. Some shy students who are embarrassed about leaving the room are likely to feel a stigma with pull-out. Others don't want to feel like they are "different" from their peers. If students are identified for the first time in their intermediate grades (4, 5, 6), they are more likely to feel the stigma of receiving "extra help" than a first grader.

It is possible, then, that the stigma and resulting effect on a special needs students' self-esteem holds consequences later in a child's academic life, in the middle school and high school years. Results from interviews with several current and one former high school resource teacher indicate this may be true. What we don't know is the extent to which a student's placement for services, whether in a resource setting or through integrated special services, makes a difference in the rate at which a student is likely to finish school. This was a primary issue brought up in the Regular Education Initiative in 1986.

**New "swinging door"** - Integration has the temporary effect on regular education students of requiring them to get used to different adults coming and going out of the classroom. One teacher who has worked out a schedule to integrate all programs into her classroom (Chapter I, Bilingual, Alaska Native Education, and Special education resource) told us that it is confusing to the students for about the first quarter. Students get used to the new "swinging door" in time. According to this teacher (who has training in special education), the benefits of integrating far outweigh the initial problems. Difficulties can arise when the person who is supposed to be in the classroom at a certain time doesn't show up. Again, flexibility is a requirement with integration. This teacher worked very hard on scheduling people to be in her room, and without scheduled planning time, relies on detailed lesson plans and notes written for the classified staff. It is more time consuming for her, but she believes it is best for the students.

The new swinging door provides more in-class help to students and teacher. However, finding the time to plan jointly with specialists, communicate with classroom aides and staff from categorical programs, and remember an elaborate schedule of people as they come and go presents a challenge to classroom teachers. Once the schedule is established, the challenge is increased as educators attempt to accomplish program goals.

**Support for the concept, frustration with the reality.** In concluding this section, it is important to note that there is support for the **concept** of integration. Most teachers and program staff feel that in order for the concept to become reality, they need certain things which have not been given them. It is time for the district to move from the philosophy of "they'll work it out" to a supportive, proactive role on behalf of school staff who are working to implement a program that they weren't fully prepared to implement. Regular education teachers need training in the following areas: effective team teaching, successfully working integrated models, background knowledge about disabilities, and strategies on ways to teach disabled children. There must be increased understanding of the specific program goals and accountability of special program staff when serving students in integrated settings.

**Staff turnover.** Many special educators and special programs staff who participated in the study said they'd only been at the current school for a year or two. This prompted us to look at the issue of staff turnover as a factor which can interrupt the flow of integration efforts in school buildings. Table 33 shows staff turnover rates from the 1991-92 school year to the 1992-93 school year.

Table 33
Teacher and Program Staff Turnover Rates* from 1991-92 to 1992-93

| | Elementary | Secondary |
|---|---|---|
| Regular Education Teachers | 13% | 11% |
| Special Education Teachers | 22% | 25% |
| Chapter I Program Staff | 36% | 0% |
| ANE Program Staff | 29% | 80% |
| Bilingual/Bicultural Program Staff | 45% | 20% |

Source: The Personnel Department, September, 1993.
* Turnover rates include both new hires and in-district transfers.

**The Link Between Commitment and Resistance.** It is ironic that across the board, the more deeply committed our special program staff members are to the goals of their particular program and "their" students, the harder it has been for integration to occur. We see this with the Chapter I staff who are deeply committed and highly trained in teaching reading. The reading assistants feel they lose something by going into classrooms to provide services to targeted students, in part because they had seen positive results with their program prior to implementation of the integrated model of service delivery. This is not to say they don't enjoy working with teachers. Their program has shifted from a predictable, planned, (often highly structured) setting to one in which they must depend on the quality of instruction from classroom teachers for determining how well Chapter I students do. There is the issue of accountability for the achievement of students in the Chapter I program, and when reading assistants are not engaged in collaborative planning with teachers or are used as classroom aides, the extent to which they perceive themselves as being effective instructors is diminished.

One special education teacher prefers not to integrate because she loses sight of her students and her goals for them. When she leaves a classroom after integrating, she is not sure what follow up will take place that will ensure success for "her" students. This teacher and many more like her, have "ownership" for the goals of their students. Strong feelings of ownership may prevent her from seeing integration as better than what she can help students achieve in a small group setting. Successful integration efforts require educators to share responsibility. Some teachers are not ready to do this. Other teachers feel competent to meet student needs without bringing other adults into their classrooms.

**The Process of Changing.** Part of the hesitancy of classroom teachers to try and/or maintain an integrated program has to do with comfort levels and adapting to change. Our special education department sees the implementation of an integrated model as a process in various stages of development. Some people are willing to jump in and try new things while others hold off, waiting for some "evidence" that the new way will work. It is clear that educators across the district are at different stages in the change process. Our study revealed a number of "natural integrators" with the commitment to provide integrated services to students. These teachers were willing to change what they were doing and risk trying something new. There are many more educators in our district who need a stronger foundation of knowledge and a clearer understanding of integrating services in order to implement an integrated model. Willingness to integrate is tied to knowledge, beliefs, and comfort levels of each individual teacher. The primary question moves from "what can the district do to support integration" to "what specific kinds of support do regular classroom teachers need in order to encourage their personal efforts to integrate students?"

Integrating special services is still a relatively new development in the educational scheme of things. It is a major challenge in our district, even after five years of effort. Implementing an integrated model of service delivery necessitated a look at the ways in which the following issues were dealt with over the five year implementation period: What types of support were provided to the teaching staff prior to presenting the challenge of integration? How prepared were principals for leading the development and implementation of building based integration plans, and how much support did they show their staffs in planning for building level inservices? How clearly was integration and the five-year plan defined and communicated to schools? Examination of concerns from principal roundtable discussions in spring of 1992 were markedly similar to concerns which had arisen years previously regarding integration. There is lack of evidence that concerns voiced by school staff and administrators were addressed such that problems with the integration model could be overcome. The grass roots integration which was already occurring in schools would have occurred regardless of whether the district had established the goal because of characteristics and commitment of the staff. The overall numbers of students receiving services in fully or partially integrated settings are impressive on the surface, but school staff are not necessarily satisfied with the outcomes, neither for themselves as a staff, nor for students whom they are trying to serve.

## INTENDED AND UNINTENDED OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATING SPECIAL SERVICES

**Intended Outcomes.** There are good things which have come out of the implementation of the integrated model. There are **more special educators and regular educators working together.** Many educators enjoy the shared responsibility and team approach, reporting a heightened level of **professional growth and satisfaction** with what they are doing to provide integrated services. More students who qualify for services through categorical programs and resource programs are **remaining in the classroom** with their regular education peers. Better communication and in-class service delivery has resulted in **less fragmentation** in content and curriculum for some students who receive special services. More **students in intensive resource programs are spending more time in regular education settings.** Many students are benefitting from integrated services which are **relevant and cohesive.**

**Unintended Outcomes.** Change brings unintended outcomes as well. There is some degree of **resistance to change** which is the product of skepticism that the integrated model can be accomplished with the level of resources that the district is currently asking special educators to function under. In other words, the perceived lack of support prevents some educators from either trying the option or continuing with it.

There are **logistical problems** which create barriers to **joint planning time and to scheduling.** There is an ever **increasing population of special needs children** in our schools who place demands on their classroom teachers in many areas: academic, social, emotional, and behavioral. **Large class sizes inhibit successful integration** because there is simply no room for more children and more adults. There are regular education teachers with **difficult "regular"**

**classrooms to manage.** Where teachers have not bought into the model, there is more of a **proliferation of "turf"** as to what regular classrooms provide versus what special educators provide.

**Different perspectives on students.** While some teachers see the integration model as a new way to provide services that will reach more children, others view the model as an additional burden on their time and energy. Part of the reason could be that specialists are trained to work with students on an individual basis, targeting their specific strengths and weaknesses and designing instructional programs accordingly. Classroom teachers are trained to teach to a whole group. While some teachers are resistant to change, others simply lack the knowledge and comfort level in trying to meet the needs of special learners. Anticipating and planning for the effects of role changes within the disciplines of regular and special education is necessary. Until that occurs, the teaching staff who have a program which they believe works well for students should be recognized for their hard work whether they integrate or not. After five years, teachers feel that if they are not integrating they are somehow the "bad guy" and this should not be the case.

**Educating teachers.** Some teachers in the district who are not integrating have not been convinced that the district has moved to something **better** by integrating services when considering their own students. In some cases they are right -- integration is not for every child. Having time to plan and communicate can enhance integration efforts for students who will benefit from it. Without an opportunity to communicate goals and expectations and build trust, integration won't occur to the degree that it is effective, and a pull-out model is likely to continue as the predominant mode of service delivery.

It was not the intent to have the integration of special services cost the school district a lot of extra money, and it has not. But there has been a cost. A percentage of our teaching staff, many of whom have worked very hard over the past five years to make integration happen, have demonstrated a tremendous commitment to integration. Some of these teachers will likely continue to integrate whether they receive additional support or not. Others may begin to back off on trying to provide integrated services with the current level of staffing and support. Others have already given up, perceiving that they need more than what they've been given to implement this model.

Interviews with special programs administrators indicate an awareness of the stumbling blocks which inhibit successful integration. The findings presented in this report are not different from the issues they hear every day as program managers and supporters of the district's special learners. The district needs to look for ways in which the goal to integrate services can be realized in such a way that it does not take a toll on those who are trying to comply. The district needs to provide more examples of successful working models along with training to regular classroom teachers. It is important to acknowledge all options for delivering services and recognize the value of individual placement decisions for students, from integrating within classrooms to pull-out approaches and self-contained settings.

This report presents information regarding the implementation of integration as a way to serve the needs of special learners in our district. It is not intended to be an evaluation of the effectiveness of special education nor of special services. That type of study would involve close examination of IEP's, schedules, program goals and objectives, student outcomes, control groups, and technical analyses of methods and strategies. Rather, the authors looked at the level of integration occurring and identified strengths and weaknesses with integration as the concept moved from philosophy to reality in our school district.

It is hoped that readers have acquired a greater understanding of the characteristics of special learners and the importance of reaffirming a commitment to appropriate needs-based placement options for children. Certainly integration of services can and should be considered a viable placement option for some students. A full continuum of placements should always be considered and the placement made based on the characteristics and needs of students with parental input. Integration should not continue to be viewed as a mandate, as mandates tend to breed defensiveness.

The anticipated success for the integrated programs at Ladd and Arctic Light are based upon a full year of scheduled planning time and specialized training which included both special education and regular education staff; full awareness of expectations for classroom teachers; a full spectrum of resource services, including a resource room for students who need it; a model to follow which has been in place for the past ten years; and full support of both building and central office administrators.

Our other schools did not have an equal opportunity to succeed with integrating special needs students the way these two schools have (or will have), even with small grants for planning time which occurred within this five year period. For most, it has been an uphill climb. This study found both support and dislike for the integration model, with the most frequent determinant for the model's success tied to the belief and willingness of staff to make it work. Unfortunately, with the district's resources and growing numbers of special needs students, the model has not met with the level of success that it could have. Training and adequate staffing will help the model to be more effective in our district. Integration will occur in most, if not all, schools, whether it remains a district goal or not. There is commitment for integration to be an option. With staff turnover, it starts all over. It is not possible to develop and implement an integrated situation and expect it continue after a teacher leaves. The success or failure of integration is too dependent on teaching styles, personality characteristics, and belief systems. Even if staff does not change, students will. As one teacher told us, "integration is NOT like implementing a new curriculum. It changes every year with the group of kids you get."

# SECTION VII

# MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## MAJOR FINDINGS

This section summarizes the major findings of the study. These findings were extracted from the results of the interviews, questionnaires, and case studies. These are broad statements about what the authors found about the process of integrating special services in the regular classroom.

1. **Different levels of integration are occurring in every school across the district.** Some integration efforts are working better than others, due to the presence of several key factors that influence the effectiveness of integrated services.

2. **Building principals are generally supportive of the philosophy of integration for most groups of children, and support building level innovations developed by school staff.** There is general agreement that the concept of integration is important and worthwhile to consider, but that a lack of support limits the extent to which the model can be implemented.

3. **Some students stand to benefit more from the integrated model than others**, and it is important to consider each child's individual needs prior to making placement decisions for service delivery. There is no one best way to serve all students, and the efficacy of the integration model is highly dependent on both numbers of students to be served and the intensity of their needs.

4. Often the **service delivery model is driven by the availability of staffing or resources, regardless of how much school staff believe in the integrated model.** The district has not increased its special programs/special education budgets as a result of implementing integration, and this has limited the extent to which the model can be implemented.

5. **Training for all educators and program staff is an essential component for successful integration.** Adequate training for both regular classroom teachers and special service providers in strategies for teaching special students and in collaboration, team teaching, and working with paraprofessionals in the classroom would help integration efforts.

6. **Successful integration is dependent on the existence of key factors.** The study found the key factors to be: teacher willingness, planning time and quality communication, stability in staff, small class sizes, personalities, and positive working relationships.

7. **The efficacy of the use of integration depends on the number of students to be served, the types of students being served, and the range of the students' needs.** The belief of classroom teachers that integration is the best way to provide services to their children depends on the children they have each year.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this section are derived from the major findings of the study. There are two parts to the recommendations. The first set of recommendations pertain to the continued use of the integration model and are recommendations designed to make its implementation smoother and more pervasive. The second part of the recommendations pertains to the "pull-out" model, and what will need to be done for its continued use.

**Recommendations for continued use of the integration model:**

1. **The decision to provide services** to students in the regular classroom or in a pull-out program should be made based on the specific needs of the student and the effectiveness of the program at the particular school.

2. **Clarify to district staff that integration is one of a range of alternative methods for providing special services to students**, and that integration is not the mandated method for providing special services for all students.

3. **Provide training to regular education teachers.** While we cannot go back in time to provide training to regular education teachers, we can and should provide ongoing training from this point -- training that educates special and regular educators simultaneously so that both groups are on the same wavelength in their goals for classroom integration practices. Providing additional knowledge and building expertise will alleviate some of the barriers to integration

being caused more by a "fear of the unknown" than either to resistance to change or outright rejection of integration as a viable option for students.

4. **Find ways for classroom teachers to plan with special programs staff and special educators.** At the building level, with assistance from principals and central office staff, brainstorm and identify ways to incorporate joint planning time into the school day. Investigate what other schools and school districts are doing to provide time for planning and foster partnerships that will enhance integrated opportunities for students. Grant monies have been available for these types of activities in the past, and evaluations of programs where planning time was provided strongly point to a higher rate of success with integrated programs.

5. **Review the special services staffing for intensive resource students.** These students create special concerns for regular classroom teachers who are integrating their services in the regular classroom. Many classroom teachers will be more receptive to integrating special needs children if they are provided additional support in the classrooms. As their comfort level with special needs children increases, the need for support may diminish.

**Recommendations regarding the use of the pull-out model:**

1. **Identify the problems in delivering special services through a pull-out model, and address these problems** without eliminating the pull-out programs as one method of providing special services. Eliminate the goal of the reduction of pull-out programs, and instead investigate why pull-out programs were problematic.

**Summary:**

On behalf of teachers and program staff who are providing services using an integrated model of service delivery, the district should look at ways in which the present level of integration can be accomplished better before moving toward integrating more services for more students. For those teachers who believe that a pull-out model provides the best type of service for the kinds of students they serve, we would hope that the problems encountered using the pull-out model would be identified and addressed.

It is hoped that this evaluation of the implementation of the integrated model of delivering special services will be used to identify the appropriateness of integration for those students who stand to benefit most from being served by this model, at the same time keeping options open for delivering effective service to students who stand to benefit from a more concentrated, one on one, approach provided through the pull-out model or from a combination of both settings.

In summary, the district should seek a balance in providing special services to students. The decision to use a pull-out program or to integrate services in the regular classroom should be based on the needs of the student. The goal to reduce and/or eliminate pull-out programs in the district should be reconsidered for particular students and particular special programs. The district should not mandate that everyone will integrate special needs students in their classroom, but rather that decision should be based on what is best for the child as determined through discussions with parents, teachers, and administrators.

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# APPENDIX A

## TABLES OF RESULTS

## RESPONSES FROM SPECIAL PROGRAMS STAFF

Integration of Special Services
Responses from Special Programs Staff

## Table 17

### Issues Addressing the Delivery of Instruction

| | Special Program | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1. I am better able to give students in my program the individual attention they need to improve their skills as a result of integration. | Chapter I | 2 | 14 | 2 | 14 | 5 | 36 | 5 | 36 |
| | ANE | 0 | | 4 | 36 | 6 | 55 | 1 | 9 |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 6 | 50 | 4 | 33 | 2 | 17 |
| 2. Providing services in regular classroom settings has resulted in less direct instruction to those students in my program. | Chapter I | 7 | 50 | 5 | 36 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 2 | 25 | 2 | 25 | 4 | 50 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 4 | 33 | 5 | 42 | 3 | 25 | 0 | |
| 3. I am able to provide services to more students as a result of being in the regular classroom, even students not identified for service delivery through my program. | Chapter I | 4 | 27 | 8 | 53 | 2 | 13 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 4 | 40 | 4 | 40 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 10 |
| | Bilingual | 5 | 39 | 4 | 30 | 3 | 23 | 1 | 8 |
| 4. Scheduling has been a major problem with providing services to my students in the integrated setting. | Chapter I | 5 | 33 | 7 | 47 | 2 | 13 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 5 | 42 | 4 | 33 | 3 | 25 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 5 | 39 | 3 | 23 | 4 | 31 | 1 | 8 |

## Integration of Special Services
## Responses from Special Programs Staff

### Table 17 (continued)

### **Issues Addressing the Delivery of Instruction**

| | Special Program | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 5. The integrated model provides students with instruction that supplements, and does not replace, the instruction they receive from the classroom teacher. | Chapter I | 2 | 14 | 10 | 71 | 0 | | 2 | 14 |
| | ANE | 3 | 27 | 6 | 55 | 2 | 18 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 2 | 15 | 7 | 54 | 4 | 31 | 0 | |
| 6. The training I have received for providing services to [program] students in regular classroom settings has adequately met my needs as a service provider. | Chapter I | 4 | 29 | 7 | 50 | 2 | 14 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 1 | 9 | 5 | 50 | 2 | 18 | 3 | 27 |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 9 | 75 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 17 |
| 7. I support the district's efforts toward the integration of services for students in the [program], where students are served in the regular classroom setting. | Chapter I | 4 | 33 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 50 | 1 | 8 |
| | ANE | 3 | 33 | 3 | 33 | 3 | 33 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 1 | 8 | 7 | 54 | 5 | 39 | 0 | |

Integration of Special Services
Responses from Special Programs Staff

## Table 18

### Issues Addressing Content/Materials

| | Special Program | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1. The content I cover with the students in my program is similar to the content being covered in the regular classroom. | Chapter I | 7 | 47 | 5 | 33 | 3 | 20 | 0 | |
| | ANE | 1 | 8 | 8 | 67 | 3 | 25 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 3 | 23 | 7 | 54 | 3 | 23 | 0 | |
| 2. The materials I use with students in my program are similar to materials used in the regular classroom. | Chapter I | 5 | 33 | 8 | 53 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 3 | 30 | 5 | 50 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 10 |
| | Bilingual | 1 | 8 | 10 | 77 | 2 | 15 | 0 | |
| 3. Integration has provided better consistency between content covered in the regular classroom and content covered through my program. | Chapter I | 3 | 21 | 4 | 29 | 5 | 36 | 2 | 14 |
| | ANE | 1 | 13 | 4 | 50 | 3 | 38 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 1 | 8 | 6 | 50 | 5 | 42 | 0 | |
| 4. Integration has resulted in less duplication of services for those students who qualify to receive services through more than one program. | Chapter I | 2 | 15 | 8 | 62 | 3 | 23 | 0 | |
| | ANE | 0 | | 4 | 33 | 5 | 42 | 3 | 25 |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 6 | 50 | 6 | 50 | 0 | |

## Integration of Special Services
## Responses from Special Programs Staff

### Table 19

### Issues Addressing Collaboration

| | Special Program | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1. I am comfortable working in classroom settings to serve students who qualify to receive program instruction. | Chapter I | 5 | 39 | 6 | 46 | 2 | 15 | 0 | |
| | ANE | 6 | 60 | 4 | 33 | 0 | | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 5 | 39 | 5 | 39 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 15 |
| 2. Classroom teachers are receptive to having me come into their classrooms to work with students. | Chapter I | 3 | 21 | 8 | 57 | 3 | 21 | 0 | |
| | ANE | 4 | 36 | 4 | 36 | 3 | 27 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 5 | 39 | 6 | 46 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| 3. The integrated model has resulted in better communication between me and classroom teachers. | Chapter I | 5 | 36 | 5 | 36 | 3 | 21 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 1 | 9 | 7 | 64 | 3 | 27 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 10 | 77 | 3 | 23 | 0 | |

Integration of Special Services
Responses from Special Programs Staff

Table 20

**Issues Addressing Students Needs/Outcomes**

| | Special Program | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1. The decision to integrate [program] students into regular classrooms for services is made based upon student needs. | Chapter I | 2 | 13 | 8 | 53 | 2 | 13 | 3 | 20 |
| | ANE | 2 | 20 | 6 | 60 | 2 | 20 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 5 | 42 | 4 | 33 | 3 | 25 | 0 | |
| 2. Serving [program] students in an integrated regular classroom setting allows me to accomplish the goals of my program effectively. | Chapter I | 1 | 7 | 3 | 21 | 4 | 29 | 6 | 40 |
| | ANE | 2 | 22 | 3 | 33 | 3 | 33 | 1 | 11 |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 4 | 33 | 4 | 33 | 4 | 33 |
| 3. Students demonstrate a higher level of achievement with the integrated model of service delivery than with a pull-out model. | Chapter I | 2 | 15 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 39 | 5 | 39 |
| | ANE | 0 | | 4 | 50 | 4 | 50 | 0 | |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 3 | 25 | 7 | 58 | 2 | 17 |
| 4. Serving students in integrated classroom settings affects the self-esteem of students in a positive way. | Chapter I | 3 | 21 | 5 | 36 | 5 | 36 | 1 | 7 |
| | ANE | 1 | 9 | 7 | 64 | 2 | 18 | 1 | 9 |
| | Bilingual | 1 | 8 | 5 | 39 | 6 | 46 | 1 | 8 |
| 5. The students I serve through my program are comfortable receiving [program] instruction in the regular classroom setting. | Chapter I | 5 | 36 | 8 | 57 | 1 | 7 | 0 | |
| | ANE | 1 | 8 | 6 | 50 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 33 |
| | Bilingual | 3 | 23 | 7 | 54 | 2 | 15 | 1 | 8 |
| 6. Students are given a choice of whether to receive [program] services in a pull-out program or in an integrated classroom setting. | Chapter I | 0 | | 0 | | 4 | 27 | 11 | 73 |
| | ANE | 0 | | 3 | 27 | 3 | 27 | 5 | 42 |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 7 | 54 | 4 | 31 | 2 | 15 |
| 7. Student feedback regarding having [program] services delivered in the regular classroom setting has been positive. | Chapter I | 1 | 8 | 9 | 69 | 2 | 15 | 1 | 8 |
| | ANE | 0 | | 5 | 50 | 4 | 40 | 1 | 8 |
| | Bilingual | 3 | 23 | 7 | 54 | 3 | 23 | 0 | |

Integration of Special Services
Responses from Special Programs Staff

Table 21

**Issues Addressing Parents**

| | Special Program | Strongly Agree N | Strongly Agree % | Agree N | Agree % | Disagree N | Disagree % | Strongly Disagree N | Strongly Disagree % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Parents are given a choice of whether to have their child receive [program] services in a pull-out program or in an integrated classroom setting. | Chapter I | 0 | | 1 | 7 | 4 | 27 | 10 | 67 |
| | ANE | 1 | 9 | 2 | 18 | 4 | 36 | 4 | 36 |
| | Bilingual | 3 | 23 | 6 | 46 | 4 | 31 | 0 | |
| 2. Parents are notified regarding the setting in which their students will be instructed through this program, whether it be an integrated classroom setting or in a pull-out program. | Chapter I | 7 | 50 | 3 | 21 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 21 |
| | ANE | 0 | | 1 | 10 | 7 | 70 | 2 | 20 |
| | Bilingual | 2 | 15 | 7 | 54 | 4 | 31 | 0 | |
| 3. Parent feedback regarding having [program] services delivered to their children through the integrated model has been positive. | Chapter I | 2 | 14 | 8 | 57 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 14 |
| | ANE | 1 | 10 | 6 | 60 | 1 | 10 | 2 | 20 |
| | Bilingual | 3 | 23 | 7 | 54 | 3 | 23 | 0 | |

## Integration of Special Services
## Responses from Special Programs Staff

### Table 22

### Perceptions Regarding Overall Effectiveness

| | Special Program | More Effective | | Just as Effective | | Less Effective | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Services I provide to [program] students in regular classroom settings are (choose one: more effective, just as effective, less effective) than those service I could provide to students in a pull-out model. | Chapter I | 2 | 14 | 2 | 14 | 10 | 71 |
| | ANE | 1 | 8 | 5 | 42 | 5 | 42 |
| | Bilingual | 0 | | 4 | 33 | 8 | 67 |

Integration of Special Services
Responses from Special Programs Staff

## Table 23

Responses to, "Most students are exiting the [program] at:

| | Chapter I Program N | Chapter I Program % | Bilingual Program N | Bilingual Program % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| about the same rate as they did when only a pull-out model was used | 2 | 17 | 1 | 8 |
| a higher rate than previously, when a pull-out model was used | 0 | | 3 | 27 |
| a slower rate than previously, when a pull-out model was used | 5 | 42 | 2 | 18 |
| was not involved with this program when a pull-out model was used | 5 | 42 | 5 | 46 |

Note: ANE is not included in this table because students in that program do not need to meet program criteria to "exit."

## Table 24

## Specified Areas for Future Training
## by Special Program

Question 24: Please list two or three specific areas where you would like to receive more training in order to better delivery services to meet student needs in your program.

| Training area specified most frequently | Chapter I | Bilingual | ANE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching strategies and instructional methods (including reading, whole language, hands on activities and ideas) | X | | |
| Teacher/staff collaboration, including planning, goal setting, participation in grade level meetings | X | | X |
| Sharing of ideas and cultural information among staff in the program | | X | |
| Counseling training in working with students | | X | X |
| Behavior management and motivational strategies | | | X |

Note: X indicates area mentioned most frequently by staff in the various programs, as a result of content analysis of responses to this question. Other areas were mentioned by three or fewer program service providers and are not listed in the table, but will be passed on to program managers.

Respondents could give multiple responses.

## Table 25

## Primary Strengths of Integration Model by Special Program

| | |
|---|---|
| Lower PTR in classroom | (CH1=5) |
| Students are not singled out/labeled | (CH1=5, BIL=3) |
| Students don't miss out on classroom activities | (CH1=3) |
| Role modeling from other students/ peer interactions | (CH1=2, BIL=2, ANE=2) |
| Can help more students, including gray area students | (CH1=3, BIL=3, ANE=2) |
| Communicate with teacher/reinforce teacher's instruction | (BIL=3, ANE=2) |

**Key factors which promote successful program integration:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Teacher willingness/relationship with classroom teacher | (CH1=10, BIL=7, ANE=5) |
| Planning time/communication | (CH1=10, BIL=4, ANE=2) |

Note: Many other factors were mentioned, but none by more than two people in each program. Some of these factors are:

> Training of classroom teachers on program goals and integration.
> Being seen as another teacher in the room.
> Positive feedback from others.
> Ability to serve more students.
> Curricular and material alignment.

Table 26

Primary Weaknesses of Integration Model
by Special Program

| | |
|---|---|
| Student needs not targeted or met /lack of adequate time to serve students | (CH1=6, BIL=7, ANE=4) |
| Need more one on one instruction/ tutoring/individual attention | (CH1=3, BIL=4, ANE=2) |
| Lack of communication/cooperation with classroom teachers | (CH1=3, ANE=3, BIL=1) |
| Lack of teacher training in integration | (CH1=2, BIL=2) |
| Distracting/disruptive/too many adults in the room/students embarrassed | (CH1=4, BIL=2, ANE=4) |

**Key factors which inhibit successful program integration:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Teacher unwillingness to communicate or cooperate | (CH1=8, BIL=3, ANE=4) |
| Lack of perception/belief that student needs are being met | (CH1=5, BIL=3, ANE=7) |
| Scheduling | (CH1=6) |
| Lack of planning time/communication | (CH1=9, BIL=1, ANE=1) |
| Lack of teacher training or awareness in program goals/integration/used as aides or helpers | (CH1=6, BIL=3, ANE=1) |
| Noise | (CH1=2, BIL=3) |

Note: Many other factors were mentioned, but none by more than two people in each program. Some of these factors are:

Poor teaching by classroom teacher.
Too many students to serve/teachers to work with.
Teachers frustrated by too many programs.
Family/cultural issues.

# APPENDIX B

# SUMMARIES OF SIX CASE STUDIES

## School Number One

This school is large, modern, and houses four districtwide programs in addition to the school's programs for resource, speech/language, and gifted-talented. The school also has a program for Chapter I-Reading, Chapter I-Migrant Education, Bilingual/Bicultural education, and Alaska Native Education. Other district specialists visit regularly to provide physical and occupational therapy and additional speech services.

Special educators in the four intensive resource programs are strongly committed to integrating their students with regular education. Several students who would have been in self-contained settings five years ago were in regular classrooms full time during the 1992-93 school year, including two wheelchair children. Other special needs students spend time in regular education classrooms for reading or attend "specials" like library and music.

The primary concern among special educators in this building is finding teachers who are willing to include the intensive resource students in their classrooms for part, and sometimes all, of the day. It is the general feeling at this school that classroom teachers have not had adequate training to feel confident in their abilities to meet goals for intensive resource students.

Far more of the regular education teachers at this school feel that more support is needed to integrate special students. They have asked that consideration be given regarding student needs, class size, training, planning time, and staffing (especially special education aides). Two of the classroom teachers who integrated special needs children are wondering to what extent they are able to say "no" to integration, but it is not because they don't want the students. The teachers feel that they are ill equipped to handle the special circumstances that surround an intensive resource child, such as maneuvering a wheelchair, adapting nearly everything the classroom is doing, and remembering when a traveling aide will be available to take care of toileting needs. One teacher felt that she basically had two different programs going in her classroom the whole year -- one for the class as a whole (with a wide range of abilities in and of itself) and another for the three severely learning disabled students who were working two grade levels below the others.

These regular education teachers believe that more aide support should have been available, to assist in providing for the physical, social, and academic needs of the students. These teachers felt exhausted and pressured for time and for assistance. Sadly they admitted that something had to give, at times for the regular education students and at times for the special needs students. One teacher unselfishly gave up her non-duty recess time to stay in with a wheelchair child when the metal became too cold for him to be able to go outside. And with all she had given, she felt that it hadn't been enough to meet the child's needs. This teacher has no special education background and was afforded no planning time with which to discuss the child with the specialist.

Specialists in this building hold regular educators who take their students in high regard, but they too see the enthusiasm wane. One specialist believes that more trained aides would easily solve many of the problems with integrating intensive resource students. Both sides can see benefits for students with integration. It is large classes and lack of aide support that will derail integration efforts at this school, not resistance to change and not the lack of belief that students belong in the regular classroom. This school is most characterized by a hard working group of teachers who accept special needs children, but who are just very tired.

As class sizes grow, integration may become less likely. One primary grade teacher said that when she integrates students from the primary intensive resource program, there is just no physical space with 26 bodies, and try as she might the special needs children were segregated from the rest due to their lack of mobility and lack of space in the classroom. When you add in room for a specialist, rooms become not only crowded, but can also become chaotic. This teacher sees the benefits to having special needs students in the room, but admits it has taken years to begin to see the progress. Special educators often remark about the progress special needs students make in regular classrooms, but teachers can't always see it because they are geared towards the level of achievement they see with other students. The social value is often the larger benefit. Special educators noted a decrease in behavior problems when self-contained students are in the regular classroom than when they are in their own classroom.

Teachers who **are** integrating at this school say it is partially fear of the unknown that keeps others from trying integration. Teachers who are most comfortable with integrating have either had prior training in working with special needs students, have personal background experiences that helped them overcome their fear of handicaps, or are very self-motivated in seeking out the expertise of specialists. They **want** all the students and are willing to change themselves and their methods to ensure the environment they provide to a child will result in success. As one teacher said, "When it's working, it's wonderful. Like a little miracle happening. Some of the best success I've had as a teacher has been with special needs students. Pretty soon you don't see their handicap." These teachers are typically very flexible, open minded, and welcome other adults in the classroom. They also know their limits and say "no" when they need to. This allows a measure of control over their situation and prevents over use and abuse of their willing attitude.

Other teachers in the building don't integrate at all. Some don't believe that the needs of special students will be met in an integrated setting, and that the social helping skills that regular students have an opportunity to learn is not enough of a benefit to warrant putting a special needs child into a regular classroom. Some teachers believe in the value of small group instruction, yet aren't natural "teamers", inhibiting the potential for small group instruction to occur in their classroom with other adults. Some teachers and specialists have tried to integrate services, but have gone back to pull-out when the numbers were high or when they felt students needs were not being met.

One special education aide who takes students to regular classrooms feels the key to success for special students is the provision of extra one on one assistance to keep them on task. This way, the teacher proceeds with her lesson without taking time away from other students to continually help the few who require it. Support is **critical** for integration to work.

The resource staff for speech/language and learning disabilities we interviewed had mixed feelings about integration. The general feeling is that integration in and of itself is the best placement option for some, but a balance of both integration and individual instruction in a resource setting is the best option for most. Whether educators will be able to choose a balance of both is dependent upon the amount of support they receive, the size of regular education classes, and the availability of planning time.

### School Number Two

Philosophy differences among staff members at this school were very evident, and influenced the ways in which students at different grade levels were being served. Special programs staff at this school during the 1992-93 school year leaned toward a pull-out model more than toward integration, although they all stressed that successful integration depends on the classroom teacher. This was the only school in which all GT students were integrated via the computer lab, although they also received individual instruction several times per quarter.

This school has several special programs, including Migrant Education, Chapter 1 for reading, primary and intermediate resource programs, services for students with communication disorders (speech and language), gifted/talented, and districtwide programs for preschoolers and intensive resource primary students. Most of the support for integration exists at the primary grade levels, due to characteristics of both the special educator and the classroom teachers. But even these teachers who favor the integration model want planning time and more training in order to make the program more effective, especially when it comes to integrating intensive resource students. Teachers who accept intensive resource students into their classrooms feel a strong need for someone to provide support for students and teachers who are integrating. One teacher felt that due to lack of support (classroom aide, time to consult with specialist), her regular education children were held back.

Some teachers in this building want integration because they do not want any of their students leaving the classroom. However, they prefer not to participate in a team teaching situation because they feel the classroom runs better when they take charge of it. The principal is supportive of the decisions made by the staff for serving students, whether the decisions are to integrate or not. The school has found a way to provide time for grade level planning meetings by regularly employing break aides to cover classrooms during the students' lunch time. One traveling specialist who provides occupational therapy believes it is important to collaborate and model techniques and strategies and adapt materials in the classroom. This specialist believes that it is not appropriate to integrate on a full time basis, but there is value in seeing the activities of the regular classroom to gain a better understanding of what is expected of students, and to then help them get there.

One reason why integration has not become a favorable option for students in intermediate grades is because teachers at these grade levels have seen tremendous growth in resource students who receive direct instruction in the pull-out setting. Staff at this school tend to acknowledge that integration is not right for everyone, and are flexible in adapting to placement options to student needs. Teachers admit that it is a judgement call regarding whether a student needs the challenge of the regular classroom or whether they need to concentrate on building a foundation of basic skills. Teachers were able to name advantages and disadvantages to the model, with one major advantage being the exposure of resource students to the "sparkers" in the classroom. But the point was also made that by the time a student is in fifth or sixth grade, they have had a lot of exposure to bright peers, and still have learning problems which benefit from individual attention. Another specialist believes integration is a good option for those students who are able to do the work, but not all the time, and not with every classroom teacher. The success of students in integrated settings has as much to do with the teaching style of the teacher as it does the learning style of the student.

Several educators believe integration would be a more realistic option with either less children with special needs to be served, or increased staffing. The school is using a balance of pull-out and integrated services for students and specialists try to theme when they serve students in the resource setting to maintain continuity with the regular curriculum. However, most specialists in this building agree that it is asking too much to have teachers modify everything.

Overall, the support for integration at this building was right about in the middle, although a few extremes did exist. Several factors would promote integration in this school, including more staffing in order to integrate "right" and more time to communicate and follow up on those children who remain in classrooms for service delivery.

## School Number Three

This is a smaller school where it seemed that everybody knew just about everything about the students, regardless of the number of special programs each student qualified to receive. The atmosphere was very conducive to open communication, even without scheduled planning time. Around every corner teachers were talking together, making time to collaborate, scheduling other times to meet. The school has a genuine community feeling about it.

There is a fair amount of integrating going on, although problems with the model in this school are similar to problems found in other schools around the district: a perceived lack of aide support, high caseloads, lack of teacher training in dealing with special needs students, and limited planning time. Despite the obstacles, this school is making an effort to integrate. There is a high level of concern regarding the effectiveness of the model in meeting student needs, especially at the intermediate level. In fact, although the plan at the beginning of the year was to provide services to resource students in regular classroom settings, the idea was nixed because the skills of the students were so very low. The decision to provide intense, one on one, remedial instruction was tied to meeting student needs rather than trying to fit the students into an integrated program which would not, in the teachers' opinions, be as effective for them. Teacher-specialist teams who had integrated in previous years discussed their experiences as rewarding, challenging, and extremely time consuming. One specialist described a program in which the reading specialist, resource teacher, and classroom teacher were able to address the needs of students through in-class, small group instruction. This model had proven very successful for students and staff. Reading specialist positions have since been eliminated, resulting in decreased opportunities for continuing this type of restructured program.

Some teachers at this school are not in favor of the various "innovations" for integration being proposed by specialists in the building. This lack of support for innovations is not a resistance to change, nor is it an unwillingness to integrate or team teach. It is founded more in personalities and in a lack of belief that integrated services are better than services which can be provided in a separate setting.

Teachers are very much in support of special needs students. There is respect and trust with the program for emotionally impaired students. Both teachers who serve learning disabled students are overwhelmed with heavy caseloads that grow each year. They strongly believe in the availability of a continuum of services, and are willing to serve students in classroom settings if they feel the child will benefit most from that model. As much as they support integration for students who can be successful in that setting, they also support their pull-out programs. One special educator expressed concern for special needs children and the ongoing search for answers regarding special needs children, and concluded there is no one best way to serve students.

The program for deaf and hard of hearing children has been fully integrated at this school for the past two years. A teacher delivers the lesson and an interpreter signs for the students. Staff who are involved in this program feel this fully integrated model has raised the expectations and achievement of the deaf children and provided hearing children a unique learning environment. The primary weakness with the program lies not in the fact that it is fully integrated, but in that it spans grades one through six rather than being split into integrated primary and integrated intermediate sections. Often the lessons are geared to students at about the third and fourth grade level.

Classroom teachers who were most supportive of the integrated model of service delivery had background experience in the field of special education and were comfortable working with all levels of children and adapting materials to meet their needs. Teachers like the feeling of "community" this has fostered in their classrooms and would rather keep their students the full day.

Specialists expressed satisfaction with the relationships they have been able to develop in working closely with classroom teachers as a result of integration.

### School Number Four

This school has a core group of teachers who integrate, some of which have been integrating together for many years. The specialists in the building, with the exception of one, are strongly committed to integrating services, although they readily identified weaknesses with the model.

It is the impression of classroom teachers that the resource staff is spread far too thin and are not available for a long enough time to really impact student achievement in regular classroom settings. All teachers see a need to keep the pull-out programs for those students with specific needs which cannot be met within the regular classroom setting. This feeling was common throughout the six case study schools we visited.

One concern expressed by educators in this school is it is not possible to integrate at all grade levels due to the distribution of children across various classrooms at different grade levels. Thus, students in a program that is integrated into a classroom for language arts at the fourth grade level may not have an integrated program at the fifth or sixth grade level, and the students go back to being pulled out. Specialists are concerned about the affect this will have on students.

Most teachers mentioned the importance of positive working relationships and comfort levels with one another in order for integration to work successfully. Most teachers who are integrating with specialists enjoy having another trained professional in the classroom to observe students and provide a new perspective. They also identified problems such as scheduling, especially when more than one teacher needs a specialist during a particular block of time during the school day.

There are some concerns about integration in that when a specialist integrates, he or she is able to help other students in the classroom, but that it compromises the extent to which the specialist can devote time to the identified special needs child. Teachers have modified what they do, such as building in more drill and practice that might benefit special learners, at the same time reinforcing concepts for the regular education students. One specialist stressed that students develop stronger independent skills in the classroom than in a resource setting. However, she is concerned that the achievement of special learners in the classroom setting is always being compared with the performance of others, and that the affects on the child of always feeling they cannot do as well as their neighbor is a negative aspect to the model.

The consensus at this school is that more teachers favor the integrated model than oppose it, and more would participate in such a model if there were more resource staff and more time to communicate with one another about meeting student needs. One staff member stressed that at this particular school, it is the people who make integration work, and that where it is working, the benefits outweigh the negatives.

Several teachers are struggling with finding the time to have specialists come in and work with students AND give the students instruction in a pull-out resource model. Scheduling becomes the major barrier here, and sometimes integration efforts are abandoned for pull-out if there are too many students to serve in too many different classrooms.

There is a noticeable lack of integration occurring with the GT program at this school, although some integration is occurring at the primary level. This is due in part to compliance with parent requests, but classroom teachers expressed a desire to have more services for GT students occur within regular classroom settings.

The staff agrees that providing a blend of services is optimal for most students, but that decisions on serving children should be based upon student needs, and not on a particular model of service delivery. Staff would choose integration more frequently if there was more time to plan, work with classroom lesson plans to pre-teach and re-teach, and understand common goals. Even with adequate planning time and teacher willingness, specialists can only reach so many classrooms in any given day, and this is where their request for additional staffing is coming from. As professionals, some specialists feel a loss of autonomy in designing and implementing their own separate program for students. At the same time, they acknowledge the benefits of continuity and cohesiveness in the students' educational programs.

The program for EI students works well at this school, is highly structured, provides a safety net for teachers to return students to their self-contained room if they need to. There were no complaints from regular education teachers regarding the integration of EI students at this school. An integrated program for a visually impaired youngster at this school appeared successful, although the classroom teacher did not know how much direct benefit the student was receiving due to integration.

The success of any program for special students is dependent upon the extent to which their needs can be met in regular education environments. Teachers overall rated the CONCEPT of integration very highly, and the practice of it as being somewhere in the middle. For classroom teachers, components they feel they need are training, experience, and a workable schedule with the specialist.

## School Number Five

We visited an older, in-town elementary school which has no districtwide special education programs, but where there is a disproportionately high number of students in special programs in relation to the total school population. Integration is occurring to moderate degrees with teachers who work well with specialists and believe in the value of integrating. Scheduling is a major barrier since there are needy students in every classroom, and of these needy children, many are low functioning such that they need one-on-one pull-out in addition to the services they can receive in the integrated classroom setting.

Teachers who are integrating successfully have worked out a way to communicate with special programs staff (Chapter I, ANE, Bilingual) through written lesson plans. We found at this school, like at others, that teachers with resource or other special education training were most comfortable with having specialists in the room to work with students. During the site visit, we observed specialists in one classroom rotating around the room helping any child who needed it, and did not appear to be giving specific instruction to any one student. Again, the effectiveness of the integration model depends upon the needs of the students who qualify for special services, and if their needs are mild, they can often find success with minimal direct instruction from a specialist. Teachers feel that students with more severe needs require more than what the classroom setting has to offer, mostly because the expectations of the regular classroom and the materials being used are too far above the level at which they are functioning. For example, both the primary and intermediate grade level resource teachers were overwhelmed by the number of students who were two or three grade levels below the regular classroom grade level, and these students were lost without a strong foundation of basic skills.

The perceived level of support for integration in the building is moderately low. Specialists feel stretched to the limit. They, along with classroom teachers, would benefit from trained paraprofessional support (aides) and more planning time. Teachers at this school were more apt to attribute difficulties with the integration to the characteristics of their students than to other factors such as teacher willingness. Teachers who find value with integrating services for special learners strongly support the pull-out setting for some students. Both special and regular educators would like to serve all of their students with a balanced approach based upon student needs, but find they are unable to do so. Lack of staffing and the numbers of needy children are serious barriers to expanding an integration program at this school.

Special programs staff are providing what appeared to be successful integration programs. Two Chapter I reading assistants were observed in two very different settings delivering services to small groups of students, one which was heterogeneous and within a classroom setting and another which was homogeneously grouped in a pull-out setting. Some staff at this school spoke about integration as though they were integrating on a superficial level because they thought "that's what we're supposed to be doing." Lack of a strong commitment to the integrated program came through with some, but not all, of the special educators.

The teachers we interviewed are open to the concept of integration. The majority believe it to be a good way to serve some special needs students. They are struggling with the realities of delivering services when class sizes are already large, when the caseloads are heavy, and when some resistance is evident regarding the efficacy of integration in the first place. At this school, teachers would like to have an opportunity to discuss the problems with the pullout model of service delivery and fix those things such as fragmentation of instruction and curriculum so that children may still have their individual needs targeted but not miss out on the educational program of the regular classroom. Again, planning time and open communication between regular and special education are key factors in providing quality, cohesive educational programs to special learners.

Also stressed was the importance of providing training and direction to regular education teachers, as they are key players in the successful administering of integrated services. One regular education teacher who has a background in special education strongly supports the idea of providing support staff to work with special needs students in the regular classroom so that the regular education students are not adversely affected by the inclusion of children who require a lot of individual attention.

Specialists who integrate believe it is beneficial to be able to see the special needs child perform in the classroom setting, to understand the expectations and to work on areas of need within the context of what the rest of the students are learning. One specialist expressed tremendous satisfaction with helping a child to succeed within the regular classroom and regular program. But specialists also believe that students make good progress with a pull-out model.

The tough decision regarding whether or not to integrate, according to educators in this building, should be based upon careful consideration regarding whether the student stands to benefit more by being in a separate setting than by staying in the regular classroom. Specialists feel that it is unfortunate that because caseloads are very high, integration is not an option for some students who might benefit from it. The absence of a set time to collaborate with teachers has caused frustration and anxiety, although efforts are being made by some teachers because they believe in integration as a valuable opportunity for some of their students.

## School Number Six

This school was integrating a low number of students during the 1992-93 school year, and we wanted to find out reasons for this, especially since there had been a successful integration model occurring several years ago. The school houses three districtwide special programs: one for intensive resource in intermediate grades, one for preschool language and one for preschool children with developmental delays.

Support for the concept of integration is high at this school, especially among the regular education teachers we interviewed. Early integration experiences were not all successful. Specialists felt like classroom aides rather than professionals with expertise to share. The way this problem was overcome was by making time to plan so that each teacher would have equal responsibility with the students. Teachers strongly feel that when integration is working well, there is a benefit to a child's self-esteem. The limit on the level of integration occurring at this school is that the resource staff is already heavily scheduled, and are unavailable to work in the various classrooms who want them.

The teachers who wanted to integrate were similar in their teaching styles and personal philosophies, and were willing to change and try new things. They acknowledged that personalities are key to making integration work.

Most of the educators (both special and regular) want the flexibility to choose which model to use with which children. If they want integration to happen, they are frustrated when it does not. One classroom teacher who is integrating an intensive resource child has seen the student learn from the role modeling of other students in the regular classroom. She has seen the regular education children adapt and feel more comfortable with a disabled child. Integration is successful because there is full time aide support available in the classroom to take care of the intensive resource child's needs. There is also a scheduled planning time to meet with the special education teacher on behalf of this particular placement. Not all integration of intensive resource students has been this successful, especially when the class does not accept the child.

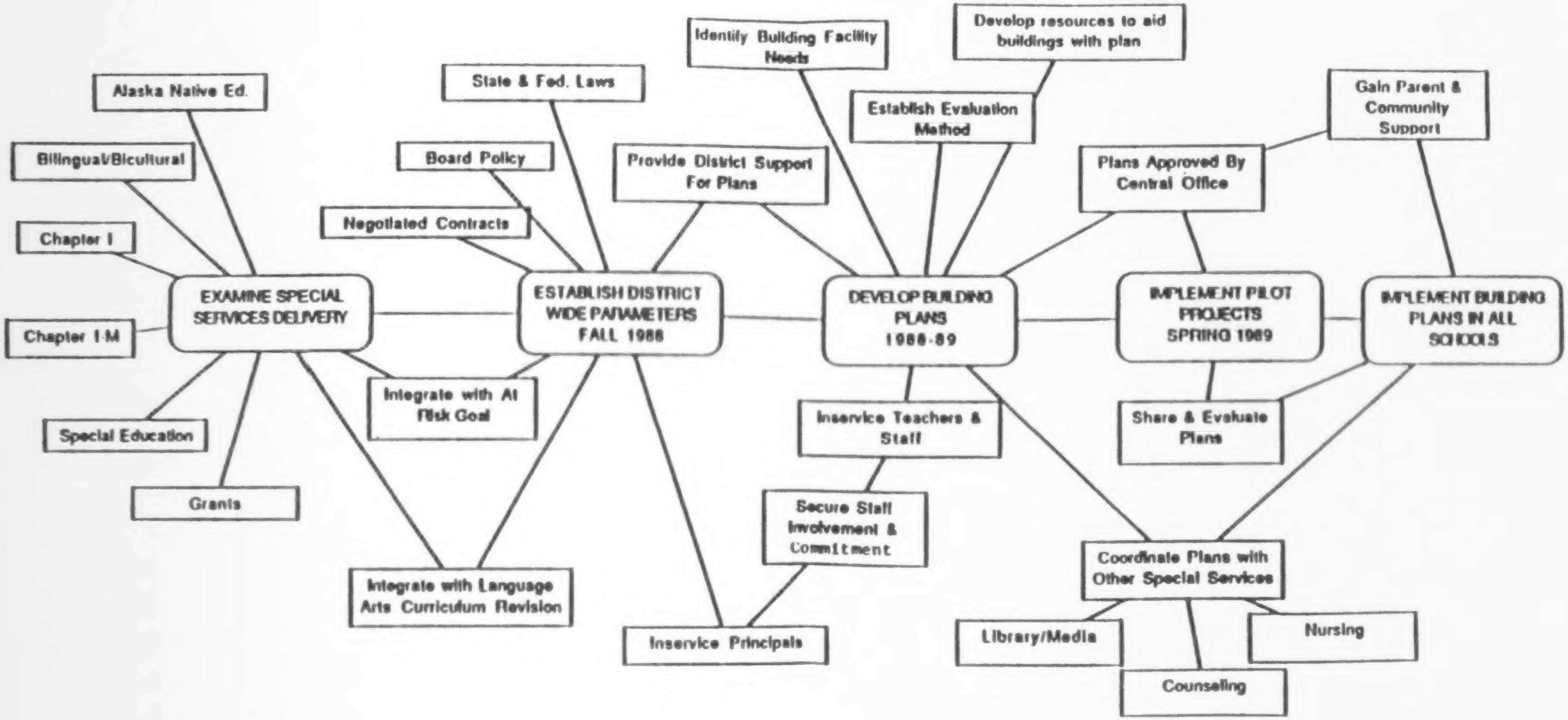
Integration efforts with learning disabled and speech/language students were occurring on a very limited basis. Two of the three resource teachers were new to the building and needed time to develop rapport with classroom teachers and work out schedules. Classroom teachers felt that smaller class sizes would promote more integration activities. One classroom teacher felt the integration of an ANE staff member during math instruction was very useful in that she believes having another person in the classroom is always a help.

This school is an example of how looking only at "numbers" can be deceiving. We chose to conduct interviews with this staff to find out why integration is not occurring, and found that there is strong commitment to the concept and willingness among staff members. They need the opportunity to try it. The principal and staff had set a goal to provide more integrated services to students this coming year.

# APPENDIX C

## Diagram of the Implementation of an Integrated Model of Service Delivery and Long Range Planning Issues Position Paper, October, 1988

## GOAL #2: SPECIAL SERVICES INTEGRATION


Alaska Native Ed.
Bilingual/Bicultural
Chapter I
Chapter I-M
Special Education
Grants
EXAMINE SPECIAL SERVICES DELIVERY
Integrate with At Risk Goal
Integrate with Language Arts Curriculum Revision
State & Fed. Laws
Board Policy
Negotiated Contracts
ESTABLISH DISTRICT WIDE PARAMETERS FALL 1988
Provide District Support For Plans
Inservice Principals
Identify Building Facility Needs
Develop resources to aid buildings with plan
Establish Evaluation Method
DEVELOP BUILDING PLANS 1988-89
Inservice Teachers & Staff
Secure Staff Involvement & Commitment
Plans Approved By Central Office
Gain Parent & Community Support
IMPLEMENT PILOT PROJECTS SPRING 1989
IMPLEMENT BUILDING PLANS IN ALL SCHOOLS
Share & Evaluate Plans
Coordinate Plans with Other Special Services
Library/Media
Counseling
Nursing

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## LONG RANGE PLANNING ISSUES POSITION PAPER - 10/31/88

Take as much space as you need to adequately address the following points for each issue:

1. Name of Issue: Special Services Program Integration

2. Responsible Department:

3. Desired Outcome: Effective communication and administration support.

4. Explanation of Issue: Special Services include Alaska Native Education, Bilingual/Bicultural, Chapter I, and Special Education programs. Since many of these special services focus on language acquisition and skills development, a consistent delivery system to improve overall efficiency is needed.

5. Educational Considerations/Issues Discussion: Educationally, an integration of services model recognizes that the relationship between the classroom teacher and student is essential to improving student outcomes. Special Services staff working directly with the classroom teacher and student allows the student to work in the least restrictive environment to achieve educational success.

6. Facilities and Demographics Impact: Facility needs would likely be reduced since students would remain in assigned classrooms. Some classes would continue to be needed for severely/profoundly handicapped, but only about fifty percent of the current space used would be necessary at the end of five years.

7. Budget Considerations:

8. Options and Their Pros and Cons: The development of an integrated model for the delivery of Special Services is supported by the following factors:
   - improved teacher attitudes
   - reduced class size
   - individual control of time management
   - increased teacher time with students
   - increased student time on task
   - reduced pullouts
   - reduced class disruptions
   - reduced travel between schools
   - locate teacher responsibility for student outcomes with a specific teacher
   - reduced tendency to label students and turn them over to others for outcomes
   - reduced frequency of student discipline concerns requiring external control and remediation
   - increased opportunity for mainstreaming in the least restrictive environment
   - increased opportunity for enrichment (computers, gifted/talented, ongoing inservice)

   The model is not supported because it:
   - represents change
   - creates difficulty if teachers are not prepared/trained
   - eliminates "identity" of special programs and recognizes all school personnel as educators

9. Administrative Recommendation:

# APPENDIX D

# VERBATIM RESPONSES FROM PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRES

## Results from Principal Questionnaires

**Question 1: What does "integration of special services" mean to you as a building principal as far as how you organize and manage instruction in your building?"**

Integration to me is to provide education to a child in a manner that does not allow a stigma to be placed on kids in special education.

The purpose of integration is to provide a less restrictive environment for students. Only those instructional areas that require unique instruction or unique settings that would be disruptive to a "regular" classroom should be removed from the traditional classroom.

It means working with special needs students in a setting with regular education kids with the support of the resource staff in that setting. It means less pull-out, more staff collaboration for planning and instruction. It means more diverse strategies for all students, higher expectations for many special students. It requires less time be spent on paperwork during school day and requires elaborate scheduling and organizational consideration.

The provision of services within the regular classroom. These [services] may be of a supportive nature (e.g. an "aide" in the classroom), team teaching (actually teaching together), parallel teaching (working simultaneously with small groups within the class), among other models. As far as organization and management, there is support, encouragement, to integrate as much as possible and appropriate, but to stay flexible as to the needs of students and staff. Integrate as a positive plan of action, not for the sake of integration.

Integration of special services means delivering services to students in the least restrictive setting for them whenever possible. Learning disabled students may be served in the regular classroom when it is appropriate and students in self-contained special programs can be mainstreamed. I did not have the opportunity to "organize and manage" placement of students for integration purposes this year as this is my first year in the building. I am working with the special education people to plan for the optimum use of this time in meeting needs of students next year and integration will occur when possible.

Children need to feel a part of a whole. As an administrator, I believe students should be in a classroom setting as much as possible. Sometimes the "least restrictive environment" is pull-out. However, studies show that students who receive modified instruction within their regular classroom tend to stay in school at a higher rate than those in pull-out programs. In order for this to be effective, PTR must be lower (20-22) AND sufficient planning and collaborative teaching time provided for special education and regular education staff. We do not live in a special ed world. We need to assist all children in developing their individual abilities within the whole society.

Integration of special services is designed to meet the needs of special students without the fragmentation of pull-out. It is designed to keep labels from occurring and hopefully help self-esteem. It also should provide better communication between the specialists and classroom teachers and better teaming for each child's benefit.

I have been extremely fortunate to have such a high caliber of special ed teachers who work well with regular education teachers. I have scheduled music, PE, library in grade level blocks so that special ed could have consistent access to grade level students. With whole language and integration of curriculum, the old match of subject time no longer works. I have yet to find a way for special education to have mutual planning time with 23 classroom teachers. I am also concerned that specifics of an IEP get watered down. Not all resource students in the same class have the same needs!

As often as is appropriate, our resource, bilingual/bicultural people work in the classroom as part of a team. This not only enhances our service but lowers PTR for that period. Students do not feel separated, but part of the learning group.

Integration means looking at the needs of the students and deciding what would be the least restrictive environment to successfully deliver the program. In my opinion, based on my observations, resource has been somewhat neglected at [school name]. It is my goal to have special ed services be on an equal footing with classroom services. These changes don't happen over night.

Integration of special services is a program that we value and one in which we have concerns. Equitable instruction for all students is paramount and we strive to fulfill this goal utilizing various methods. The organization and management of integration is staff developed at this site. Special education, regular education and administration working to fulfill the requirement of the IEP in a way that is least restrictive for the student. Our concern with integration is that we believe some special education students need direct instruction from a specialist to remediate a deficiency and practice new skills.

Have teachers work together to integrate into classrooms. Give teachers, not just aides, the skills to integrate. Related to the above, train teachers that integrate that they are not aides in another teacher's classroom.

Integration of special services does not change my management style because this has always been my way of doing business. It does mean working to build good communication, strong sense of school team work, and an appreciation for unique differences and strengths that we all add to the benefit of students.

Basically, that all special services are delivered within the classroom setting with the collaboration of special services staff. There will probably always be a need for some exceptions to this, as in SED students or severely retarded/disabled.

There is not enough personnel available to cover the needs of students. There is not enough flexibility of time to integrate at appropriate times because the specialist is shared between schools. No time for 'roving' specialist to meet with staff, parents, etc.

Students spending a minimum of 4 hours of their learning day in the regular classroom.

Providing the time for special ed and regular instructors to plan and collaborate in an effort to better meet the needs of the special students with minimum pull-out.

Integration is the method of providing the best educational setting and environment for students with special needs and IEP's. Not all students benefit just from an integration program. Sometimes some of the students will benefit from a pull-out program.

Scheduling special ed/bilingual/Alaska Native Ed to achieve delivery of services in the most appropriate setting, classroom, or pull-out setting.

Integration means to me that a team of teachers plan, implement, and evaluate the services they are delivering to identified students. These services are coordinated, thematic, and delivered in the regular classroom setting whenever possible. In 1990-91, I was lucky enough to be able to hire two full time special education teachers that believed in the Regular Education Initiative and integrating services. They sold the regular education staff on the possibilities.

Utilization of special education staff to provide the least restrictive environment for students on IEP's. This may mean offering a combination of self-contained and mainstreamed educational opportunities in a multi-graded setting.

Because we have made extensive efforts to integrate, scheduling has been the most difficult area, probably because of our student body size. Integration of resource students in regular classes is mainstreaming, which is a major emphasis in our school.

To me this means taking the opportunities these programs provide for students and incorporating them into the daily program of a student's life.

It has an up side and a down one. If we can use existing special ed teachers creatively it may open new possibilities. Without support, it makes the classrooms even more difficult to manage.

To me it refers to integrating the special programs within the learning structure of the regular classroom as opposed to pulling students out or creating special ed classes.

It is my expectation that special needs students will be integrated into regular ed classes wherever possible.

Integration of special services means that students with special needs receive instruction in a least restrictive environment where there is coordination between regular education teacher and special education teacher to achieve goals for a student's IEP.

It becomes necessary to have the master schedule made to serve special ed students and to select staff that will be able to deliver instruction to these students.

**Q2: Please list building level inservices which have occurred in your school in the last three years regarding the integration of special needs students and/or students in special programs.**

(Elementary Principals)
School 1: None.
School 2: A review of the way educational services are presented and the staff's attitude towards special needs students.

School 3: Section 504. Our staff development and "inservice" has largely been in small groups with affected staff. "Hands on" modeling and discussion. We've done 2 FAS/FAE workshops, an EI sectional, a sectional with program managers.
School 4: None to my knowledge. Definitely none over the last two years.
School 5: None.
School 6: Behavior modification. Math adaptations.
School 7: Planning for at risk students. Strategies for at risk students. Implementation of strategies and integration. Building integration model. Working with EI children. Integration and at risk students with whole language.
School 8: CLAS. Integration discussed at August inservices each year. Story Grammar.
School 9: None.
School 10: Section 504. How students qualify for special ed. What is intervention.
School 11: Writer's Workshop. Computer Lab. Scheduling.
School 12: Scheduling to allow teachers to plan together.
School 13: Integration model design.
School 14: Intro to basics of conflict resolution and behavior management. Integration of delivery methods to students.
School 15: This is my first year. No inservice per se this year but we did have two meetings with [staff name] regarding concerns for meeting student needs.
School 16: As part of building goals in 1992-93.
School 17: None.
School 18: Integration. Intervention teams.
School 19: Integration strategies in 1990-91.
School 20: On-going every building inservice.

(Secondary Principals)
School 1: ADHD, Section 504.
School 2: Not during an inservice. Specialist has explained the integration model (Issaquah) to our staff (Fall 1990). In 1992, 3 faculty meetings were used to explain modifications for special students.
School 3: Student Assistance Program, Spring 1993.
School 4: None that I'm aware of.
School 5: There have been none.
School 6: Special ed services, 1992-93. GT services, 1992-93.
School 7: ADD, 1991-92 school year.
School 8: Deaf Awareness, 1992. GT instructional methods, 1991. Integration model, 1992.

**Q3: On a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), please rate the overall support for integration of special services in your building. State why you gave that rating. What factors affected your rating?**

Low -- need inservices for material adaptation. Need recognition for new ideas that create successes for ALL students.

9 - Each individual students; needs will be discussed with the staff members involved. A decision as to how to serve that student is always open. No policy is established as to how a program will operate.

5 to 8. Depends on individual and grade level. Primary is more flexible. There's broad-based support at two of the three intermediate grade levels and for two of the three special education staff members. It's very personality dependent.

A 5. Some teachers are more comfortable with teaming in the classroom than others. Another factor is that with changes in special education staff, a new balance of cooperation, knowing each others' strengths, talents, etc. Taking time. Support is there, but it is a building process. Also, training of regular education and special education staff for integration needs to be done more. Overall, teachers are very supportive of having and working with integrated students, depending upon their total class load and concentration of special needs students.

A 5. I believe there is support but I am unaware of past practices and what was planned. Our intermediate resource person was new this year and her schedule lost flexibility because of a special needs kid transition problem. Our primary resource person integrates on a small scale in 3rd grade. We plan to look at the possibilities for the future. It is something that has to be carefully planned in advance with placement in certain classrooms.

A 2. We are given field trip busses for wheelchair students. Planning time built into weekly schedules. Some is provided at year's end for placing students in the next year's classes. Integration of intensive resource children is a necessity in order to do it effectively, PTR MUST be lower in classes/schools which house those programs. Required physical apparatus in classrooms is an issue as well as the increased attention needed by the teacher who has intensive resource children in class.

A 7. Need for more inservice for regular teachers on effective models. Scheduling difficulties. Philosophically there is strong support for integration. It is continually being modified.

An 8-10. Teachers have been very welcoming of special education teachers and aides working with small groups in classroom. They see value in this temporary reduction in PTR. Concerns arise over planning time, really meeting needs of an IEP and blend of teaching styles.

An 8. There is still support for pull-out services as needed for students who profit from small group settings. We can pull from throughout the building for reading or math as an example and do intense remediation and not interrupt the regular class flow.

A 3 overall. But for primary resource, 7. They are working in classrooms with 50% of teacher support. Intermediate = 1. For years she has been viewed as another person to offer a reading group. Speech/lang = 3. Some work in primary classrooms and he integrates with the intermediate resource teacher. GT a 1. All pull-outs. I do realize that current research says GT needs to be grouped). JOM 1 -- tutor/pull-out: EI a 5 (varies with each student).

A 5. Most teachers think integration is fine and some readily embrace its concepts. Others, however, think that students with special needs require more one on one contact and a more focused instructional concept. I feel that a mix of the two programs, integration and pull-out, established by the needs of the student is a more beneficial way of presenting materials and concepts to students. The needs of the soul, i.e. self-esteem, self-concept, etc., are great but the demands of daily living require that intellectual skills need to be practiced and learned.

A 3. I have not had anyone in my building from the outside to help with integration.

A 9+. Strong team, good communication, value of individual differences, expressed philosophy at the beginning of the year. Support of central office special services department, feedback from staff.

An 8. Most of our teachers are happy to have specialists help out and participate in the classroom as opposed to having their students pulled out. However, different teachers are at different levels of acceptance concerning this.

A 2. Teachers have been very frustrated by the lack of time to effectively integrate. Finally, they asked to go back to pull-out model so perhaps more effective assistance could take place.

A 9.

An 8. Learning disabled students are almost exclusively integrated. Language students are integrated more than 50% of the time. Our teaching staff is generally very supportive of integration, and work very hard to coordinate and cooperate with special education people.

A 5. Not all teachers (classroom and special education) have bought into the integration model. Input from staff and parents.

A 7. Aide provided was very helpful; more training needed to prepare regular education teacher, (especially for mainstreaming of Intensive Resource population).

A 10 for my regular ed staff. They are in top support for integration. 1 for my special ed staff, simply does not believe it is in the best interest of special education students and nothing will change his mind. A 10 for Chapter I, Bilingual, GT schoolwide enrichment. An 8 for Speech/language.

A 5. We have been in the process of restructuring our special education services utilizing the middle school concept. Half of the special education staff is willing to work with teachers to provide meaningful mainstreamed opportunities. We are looking forward to getting teachers who are optimistic about students and willing to go that extra mile to make these students successful.

A 5. Our old timers tend to resist the efforts, whereas the newer staff are more flexible.

A 5. Program availability is presented by central office. Beyond this the implementation is totally up to the building. How we are doing, options, and other guidance is almost non existent.

A 2. Teachers are very concerned about this. They are unclear about the role of special ed under this and the level of support in the classroom.

0. I have expressed my concern that the level of special education staffing does not even meet the minimum required to work effectively with our special ed population.

An 8. Most special needs students receive their education in regular ed classes. Most teachers support the integration of special needs students.

An 8. I feel services will be better served next year with a third resource teacher so that I will have one per grade level. Right now, with current staffing, I feel we have an excellent program.

A 5. Regular classroom teachers are hesitant and reluctant to serve special ed students with learning disabilities. It appears that they fear what other students will say or do when it comes to grading special ed students.

**Q4: If the district had not established a goal to integrate special needs and special programs students into regular classroom settings, would you integrate? For what percent of students?**

Depends on teacher reception (resource and regular).

75% of the students. Yes.

For 10-15%of identified students.
Some integration had begun, but staff members as a whole would have been more reluctant with little authority for me to fight it. Pull-out would have continued to be the norm.

Yes, to the extent appropriate to the needs of the students and the situation of an individual class. Several factors enter here. Concentration of special needs students in a classroom and grade level, the student load for the resource teachers and the spread of classes involved, individual student needs, etc.

Yes. It would depend on the kids of programs and the numbers, but integration is natural. Segregation is not.

Yes. As close to 100% as possible, and as much as staff allows based on PTR, planning time, and the needs of the children. Severely impacted students are integrated into intensive resource classes at times. Not all children are able to be integrated 100% of the time, but ALL children should be integrated some of the time!

Yes, for 30%. Scheduling problems are the main obstacles.

For some, all the time. For most, some of the time. For a few, no. There is value in staying with peers and avoiding the stigma of "dummy." However, I have seen a combination of pull-out and integration provide the best of both worlds. This takes mutual planning time and so cannot occur in all classrooms.

Yes, for 50%.

Yes, for the percent of students who would benefit from it.

Yes, for 25%.

Yes, for 50%.

Yes, for 95% on a case by case, determined by child's needs. By PL 94-142 and Section 504 laws, the word "appropriate" is a big concept that must be addressed upon an individual basis. There can be no set model to which all special needs students must conform.

Yes, for 95%. We have always believed in keeping all students in the classroom at all times.

At [school name], under current staffing allocation, no. At a school where the resource staff was only in one building, yes!

Yes, for 100%.

Yes, for 100%. Regarding LD students, I would push for full integration. Students feel comfortable with it. The stigma of "special" appears to be removed. Classroom teachers feel it is less disruptive.

Yes, 50-80%.

I think we would have moved in that direction naturally. Fixing a percent would be purely speculative.

Yes, for 98%. 2%, no. You did not give me a sheet for EI, but I have several EI students every year that have not been identified yet. When these students need to be restrained, they should be taken out of the regular education classroom. Also, kids needing compliance training should be removed from the classroom.

Yes, for 75%. This is not a special education world. Students need to learn strategies to be successful in a mainstreamed environment.

Yes, for 75% of identified students.

Yes, as many as possible. They must be integrated as there are too many to put in a contained program.

Yes, for 85-90%. Some of our EI students need an autonomous program.

Yes, for 100%. I believe we are able to do so effectively, but still need more support.

Yes, for 90%.

Yes, for 75%. Some kids need the individual daily attention a pull-out provides, but not all kids, not all subjects.

No response.

**Question 5: Please comment on the school district's leadership role in guiding the process that leads to a successful integrated model for meeting the needs of students who qualify for special services. For example, did you receive the support you needed to integrate students with special needs or those in special programs?**

Need an aide for every grade level represented in the K-3 Integrated program. Regular education needs the support!

On the districtwide level, a strong philosophical statement was given to guide day to day decisions concerning the placement of students. That statement was important because as we designed programs, we knew support would be given to include all students in the regular educational program.

Not enough support has been given. Staff need more inservice. Many still fundamentally resist and remain unskilled and unmotivated to accept or accommodate special needs on any end of the spectrum. To have credibility, there is not enough time to meet paperwork and people demands.

I think there is generally good support in concept. However, additional support is needed for training staff (regular ed and special ed) in integration, team teaching, planning time together, and so forth. Additionally, to integrate services more fully, a lower caseload is necessary for resource teachers. Perhaps this can be addressed with more and consistent aide support or even better, additional resource teachers.

I don't believe I received support in the way of training in various models and approaches to providing services, but the special ed people in our building had access to information bases and provided much of the leadership once the mandate was issued. I don't believe there has been continuity when new staff was hired.

We have received some support -- by begging! We have not received lower PTR, regular planning time for special and regular education teachers to meet. Our aide support is limited and we use them to the maximum.

The goal has been clear. There have been districtwide attempts to inservice regular teachers. The special ed staff have had several training sessions and the principals have been updated at meetings. There is still a need for more training with regular education.

The special ed staff at [school name] pretty much designed the program themselves. When the district began special training they had already been doing if for two years. The reality of 1 speech/language teacher and 1 aide to 23 classrooms and 1 resource and aide to 23 classrooms puts limitations on universal application of an integration model.

Indirectly. No models were set up and displayed. We have more or less gone out and developed a working program with the blessing of downtown. Our own model has been a real success.

Because I am a new principal, it is difficult for me to speak to this. But, it seems to me that a key player in integration is the classroom teacher and their attitude towards it. Even as a teacher at [school name], I don't recall any training or information offered to the classroom teacher. Team teaching with a resource teacher might be threatening to some teachers.

When we established our building integration model (utilizing our computer lab as our setting for integration) we met only encouragement from our district's special education department. They have been most helpful in a hands off approach to our model, goals, and building needs.

There is a need for a mechanism to allow teachers to plan together.

I believe that we are the first school in Alaska to implement a model of integration at each grade level. We received assistance through the department of special education and support of the Board of Education.

The district [staff name] has been most accommodating in supporting our particular school model and use of our specialists' times.

Our staff had very bad feelings about special services this year. It was compounded with problems in speech/language time reduction and resource time reduction. All special services staff seemed to feel very understaffed.

The district had a 5-year goal as presented by the Director of Special Services. Planning time for integration.

I believe [staff name] feels strongly about the district pursuing this model. I would like to see more training for staff in this area. Special ed services may need more funding to "effectively" implement this model.

I believe the district first jumped into the integration model without adequate investigation and preparation. I also believe the district made a mistake by trying to pilot language arts textbooks and implementing integration at the same time. Adequate and effective inservices on integration were not accomplished.

We did receive training in integration. We could have used more -- special programs (mainstreaming), not enough training of regular ed teachers.

Yes, I believe that the district gave me excellent support. We had to evolve the philosophy and plan ourselves.

No, we didn't really know this was the vision of the district or special education staff. Our entire staff. Our entire staff needs training on how to work with students with disabilities. Some of the staff has never had training in special ed or how to make modifications in the classroom. Part of our problem was with our special ed staff and their inability to work with our staff in collaboration on this matter.

Yes! [Staff name] has been very supportive.

I am not aware of any leadership role provided by the school district for the success of the "integration model." We are left on our own to implement whatever we choose to do.

No, I did not receive the support to integrate students.

The support we need is more special ed staff time. The response I get is , "The smaller classes can be effective" but that is not always the case.

I have talked with [staff name] to have a group of teachers receive training next year in the Issaquah model. My staff of regular ed teachers needs to fully understand the need for integration before they are expected to teach within this model.

The support for integration came from the building special ed staff with some support from [staff name]. [Staff name] has been most helpful using the integration model.

**Question 6: In what direction would you like to see the district move regarding the delivery of special services to students?**

The current attitude is appropriate -- a goal of 50%, encouragement of integration programs, understanding all kids have unique needs.

More staff development and PR with the public to realize the rights and social necessity that mandates success of all kids in a learning setting and work on ways this can be achieved.

Continue efforts to support integration as appropriate with equal support for non-integrated services in light of the above factors and comfort levels of team teaching in the specific classrooms and at certain grade or subject levels.

More classroom aides to help kids in the regular classrooms on a daily basis. One aide for every 3 classes could make a tremendous difference, especially at the primary level. We know what to do to help kids succeed, we just need more bodies so more individual attention can be given.

Integration. Issaquah or a modified Issaquah would be wonderful. But it cannot be done effectively without a reasonable PTR and additional aide (or dually certified) staff.

I like having districtwide programs more localized. Whenever students are not bussed long distances, the program is more acceptable for families. Continued follow up with teacher training at the building level is needed. Examples of successful models for similar school populations would be very helpful.

Number one is allocating special ed staff by the number of identified special ed students will always limit integration. In early primary, where developmental and processing difficulties are first seen, more help needs to be given to assist a regular class before student failure leads to the testing path. The very act of testing tells the student something is wrong with them. I think this is a part of the stigma associated with pull-out. If we had sufficient help in K-2 to work closely with teachers in planning techniques and strategies to keep these young children successful, then the identification of a specific disability could flow more smoothly and classroom teachers could build a repertoire for addressing these needs.

Full time teams in each building which would work with classroom teachers to create integration teams. I would have pull-out time as needed, though.

My desire is a monetary one. I would like to see enough money to provide good (not just adequate) services. In my case, we were going to lose the primary teacher 1/2 time. If this had happened, it would have reduced the integration and caused the staff to lose a valuable resource for them.

Personally, I would endorse a concept of a pull-out/integrated program of instruction for special service delivery. Depending on the severity of handicap and the need of the student, placement could be in one or the other or both.

I think we are moving in the right direction, but not as quickly as we had hoped.

Least restrictive environment -- with adequate staff support and caution regarding appropriate educational needs of individual students.

Assure flexibility from school to school in their models of inclusion. Inservices directed toward collaborative teaching models.

In smaller schools, recognize that teachers and parents in these schools also need interaction time with the specialist. They need to be able to plan, review, and "consult" -- all of which take time. More time allocation is critical.

Continue sensitizing regular education faculty of academic resource students' needs.

More integration for LD and GT students.

In the same direction, with each school developing their own plan. Some students still benefit from a pull-out program. Inservices need to be provided.

I feel a balance between delivery models is best. Our current 5 year goal was to achieve 50% integration, which we have not met in our building.

I believe we are moving in the right direction.

As principal, I would like the authority to offer services based upon the needs of our students and get the staffing support to do so. We are also tired of getting students without prior knowledge or approval, especially students who will never be mainstreamed if this is a goal of the district.

The integration model IS moving in the correct direction.

I would like to see the district obtain a knowledgeable district coordinator to oversee the total scope and sequence of special ed goals. A building principal cannot be aware of all the variables and needs required.

I think integration is a good idea but not without support: more aides, more --.

I agree with integrating students, but students with special needs still need special help. Countless IEP's in the district are not being followed as closely as they might be.

More training for regular ed teachers.

Continue a leadership role by offering training opportunities to administrators and teachers.

Helping the regular classroom teacher make transitions when working with special services students. This includes counseling services.

**Question 7: Some principals have indicated that integrating students will be different next year than it was during the 1992-93 school year. Please describe any future plans you have for integration at your school.**

I would like to enhance communication between grade level and special education staff and have them come up with the best service for students.

The needs of the students must be the major factor in designing programs. If students need major in-depth instruction, a "pull-out" approach may be needed. The programs must be flexible with the goal being "less restrictive."

Staffing changes always have an affect. I would like to see every teacher have some time integrating services with a resource provider in the room. We need to do more staff development.

We expect to keep pretty much the same plan. We have had a fairly successful integration effort and teachers have worked very hard to utilize it as much as possible. This effort will continue and as appropriate will expand as resources allow. However, it is greatly affected by the numbers of students involved and members of available staff to support integration in the classroom.

We will try to increase integration in the primary grades by serving more students more frequently in the classroom at the 3rd grade level. There is already some integration with regular ed and GT on a monthly basis. We do have a cluster of students in one class that may form the basis of a working group. We are in the process of identifying a classroom at the intermediate level where integration can be developed.

If PTR stays at 26-30, it is nearly impossible to integrate intensive resource children into classrooms. Individual adaptation, individual teacher time with all students, physical space in the classroom, teacher planning for lesson modification....AND [school name] staff believes in integration for at least part of each child's day -- logistically it gets harder every year!

The changes aren't finalized yet due to cuts in staff. Waiting on final budget. Our June 1 inservice will focus on goals and changes for next year. We want to improve intervention process and delivery for first grade. We always review the special needs and students. That will be revised following new student registration.

Next year we will have a primary and intermediate resource teacher. I would like the primary person to start the year working as I have described (in classrooms, intervention). Even though official numbers may be low.

If our staff is cut and our numbers are forced back up, integrated teaching becomes more difficult. There is only so much physical space to spread bodies around. Twenty-eight to 31 kids in an old building is tough.

My primary resource teacher will be 50% resource and 50% GT for grades K-2. We are hopeful this will increase integration for those grades.

Our building model will continue as we have in the past. Our inservice this spring may develop a modified model of what we have now but, basically, we will continue on as we have this year. We think our plan is sound but it still is flexible enough to meet the special needs of the kids as they arise.

Continue as we are.

Our LIFT (Ladd Integration Format for Teaching) will begin next year in grades 1-6. Each grade level will have a LIFT classroom taught by a dually certificated teacher. The mixture of students will include 6-8 special needs students whose individual needs (IEP) will be addressed within that classroom.

Our school's model should be the same for the coming school year.

[It will be an] Issaquah planning and training year at [school name].

I have a concern regarding GT in our building. It is almost exclusively a pull-out program and I think there should be more emphasis on integrating these services also. However, due to the size of our program and the limited amount of time our GT person spends in the building, this may not be feasible.

At [school name] we'll be hiring a person who is certified in special education and GT. The main focus of this person is to integrate services for resource students. This will be done with classroom teachers who have requested integration of services.

We may look at greater integration of severe/profound population.

Well, my one hold out, that is the special education teacher, plans to leave, resign, or take leave to go back to school. If I'm able to hire someone with a belief in integration of services, I will. This will change dramatically how we deliver services to resource students.

We would like special ed staff and teachers to work collaboratively on teams. Planning team teaching situations, aides attending classes, grading, etc. are areas we are planning to address.

The resource teacher and aide will spend more time collaborating with regular classroom teachers.

Next year we will be obtaining two EI teachers, plus two aides along with 20+ new EI students. They hopefully will all be integrated or mainstreamed. For the most part we are winging it on our own on this.

We hope to restructure our classes so that students support one another and all kids have access to success.

We will continue to integrate but I will recommend that special ed students be admitted on a case by case basis with assurance that their IEP can be properly met.

I do not anticipate any changes. Special needs students are integrated into the regular ed program at [school name].

Staff training in the Issaquah model with special ed experimentation of integration piloted one team per grade level.

No major changes.

**Please feel free to comment about the integration model of providing services to students who need special services.**

There is no one integration model. Each youngster is unique and the instructional staff needs to be flexible in the delivery of services.

I'm worried about burning out staff and about parents who resent integration for their regular education child. And the continuous auger down on the level of support and quality of GT.

There is no one model. Resource teachers need to follow several models because each classroom style is different and the class make up is unique. The special education person needs to be very flexible and adaptable. There is also consideration for differences between the primary and intermediate grade level needs.

Issaquah -- collaborative and/or team teaching, flexibility in schedules -- enough space to include children in PE and music and library.

Integration has been beneficial to all the students where it has been implemented. The Issaquah method was used one year with a targeted group of students. It was successful academically and in raising self-esteem.

Theory is great! For moderately disabled, where regular and special education teachers can plan together, it works well. For severe disabled, pull-out realizes more progress.

Classroom and resource need to be able to learn to work as a team. Keeping a consistent resource team around builds trust, and people are willing to try integration.

I don't think a pure integration model is in the best interest of all special needs students. I understand about self-concepts, self-esteem, etc., however, I still feel that special needs kids need direct help in a small group setting. I am all for classroom integration but when a kid needs help with facts, where is he or she the most likely to succeed? Classroom teachers can't give an inordinate amount of time to individuals, but students can be pulled and receive more focused instruction than they can get in an integrated classroom.

You need to look more closely at the needs of small schools in a different way.

Staffing time continues to be unclear.

As stated above, I feel it is a good model that should be implemented differently at each building. I do feel that adequate staffing is a must!

I feel that services should be provided in the most effective setting. I feel that differs according to the student's needs and learning styles. I don't believe in integration for integration's sake, to meet a quota.

Hiring wisely is everything!

The integration model does work. We need time and resources to make it successful at the middle level. For example, instead of having three or four EI programs in separate buildings, organize one or 2 programs that are self-contained and two that are fully mainstreamed. You then have a specialized staff working with teachers who know expectations from the beginning.

Please continue the support.

I am not aware of an integration model.

There has not been adequate work with the teachers in terms of training on rationale.

It is the best model when adequate staffing and training is made available.

I'm concerned that we have a large number of special ed kids who, when exited by LD, they have no support from special ed and despite 504 plans, teachers are being asked to meet these kids' needs with little or no training. Slow learners who don't qualify suffer the same fate!

Too many supervisors for the staff to be accountable to. Guidelines limit the base service.

# APPENDIX E

# VERBATIM RESPONSES FROM SPECIAL PROGRAMS STAFF

Responses from Chapter I Reading Assistants/Reading Teachers

**If the district had not established a goal to provide special services such as the Chapter I program in integrated settings, would you choose to integrate? Why or why not?**

I don't know.

I like integration because I work well with other people. When I do pull-out I like it because I know what the students' weaknesses are and I can work at it.

NO! First of all, all my teachers want to have a pull-out model. I believe most of my students like the smaller groups because of the attention they get. These children seem to thrive on that extra attention. I can cover or see more students on pull-out than integration and give them more time because of combined rooms. Otherwise, I'd have to spread myself too thin. One can't cover eight classrooms to the tune of 45-50 minutes a day on a seven hour schedule!

No. Since our program is mandated to be supplemental reading instruction and we had met with so much success (measurable), since classroom teachers, parents, and children were very happy with a pull-out. And since we all saw improvement in the children's self-esteem and I would have continued a pull-out. Also, classroom teachers in most cases prefer the pull-out.

I would use a combination of integration and pull-out. This seems to be the best balance for the student and myself except in rare instances.

In some cases, yes. Teacher dependent.

Yes and no. It depends on the students and the regular teachers. I actually believe in doing both integration and pull-out. In pull-out situations, the Chapter I kids receive more individual attention and they also like the small group setting. Also, there is less interruptions. The reading assistant's concentration is focused just on the Chapter I kids, whereas when the RA is integrating, there's a tendency for her/him to spread too thin. One of the advantages though, it limits tracking.

At first I wanted to pull-out but because my principal wanted me to integrate, I was left with only two choices: do nothing or learn how to integrate. I chose to learn how to integrate and now believe it is the best way. If allowed to pull-out, I probably would have stuck with that because it was the learning style I grew up in and was most familiar with doing. I am glad I was pushed to integrate and learn another way.

I would integrate with just those teachers who have the time and inclination to work with a reading assistant. Many teachers really don't want you in their rooms.

Yes! If cooperation exists between all staff is possible and positive. This opinion is based on my experience as a classroom teacher, and past frustrations with the "revolving door." I believe it's virtually impossible to work with a whole language philosophy that includes integration between subjects and content unless special services are integrated.

No, I wouldn't choose to integrate. I feel that my reading program is more remedial, which is more effective in a pull-out setting.

Probably not, except in isolated cases where certain teachers were open and had similar philosophies.

As it is now, I feel [integration] is less effective than a pull-out for school's population.

No. I do not feel integration is successful across the board. Unless there are a significant number of students who are in need of help, integration is not successful. It merely serves to point up deficiencies that otherwise may not be so noticed. I speak from the viewpoint of a special ed parent and a formal special ed aide in this district. My daughter was the recipient of integrated services in math in her 3rd grade class. She was the only one given a number line on her desk and came home to tell my how stupid she was as a result of "everyone" telling her that after seeing the number line. I immediately exited her from resource services and have hired a private tutor. Integration -- no thanks!

Integration works best when there is mutual respect and communication between teachers and Chapter I. I work on integrated projects with staff who have the courtesy to sit down with me and plan the activities. Integration is great and I would do it more often if it were truly beneficial to the Chapter I child and not just to the teachers (by giving them an extra helper). Integration as an idea is great, but in reality it is a nightmare.

I don't understand why the regular classroom teacher should feel pressure to integrate if they wish not to do so. Is this the School Board's mandate?

Total integration benefits the classroom teacher most. It gives them another adult in the room.

Integration has advantages and disadvantages.

There was no training this year on how to integrate, while almost all assessment materials and workbooks provided were geared for pull-out situations.

Teacher training at the university level should prepare teachers to expect that we will serve a wide range of abilities at any grade level. Prepare teachers to plan lessons that involve other teachers and paraprofessionals. Don't look at integration as a way to be more efficient or to save money. Look at it as a means of helping more students to succeed in more settings.

It is fairly obvious from question 35 that I am not a "fan" of integration. I do feel, as previously stated, that it is warranted if the numbers are large enough. However, it is difficult if not impossible to meet individual student needs with an integrated model. I feel there needs to be coordination of services, a well organized delivery of services between assistants (or special ed) and classroom teachers in the setting agreed upon by grade level/school district.

I work with nine teachers and have no planning time with them. How can I possibly integrate and plan for all the projects?! These teachers have asked me to watch the children while they plan, but little consideration is given to planning time with Chapter I.

Responses from Bilingual/Bicultural Service Providers

**If the district had not established a goal to provide special services such as the Bilingual/ Bicultural program in integrated settings, would you choose to integrate? Why or why not?**

Integration can work if you can coordinate with the other special service programs in the school so you don't duplicate services. I see integration working especially when the teacher accepts classified staff coming into their domains.

I will like to integrate where I have students who will benefit from it. But I do not integrate if the students I serve have a specific need that won't be met in a group where the material is planned for students at a certain level.

I would not choose to integrate, at least not on a regular basis. Some classes might be beneficial but most of the time I can service the student extremely better (give them better explanations, they can ask freely what they don't understand, we can cover material that was explained when we were not there and not only what the teacher is covering in that moment) in a pull-out model.

I would not choose to integrate entirely. Part time basis would be beneficial. Pull-out situations can handle specific, disturbing problems.

Yes, to help other students in the class, those that might otherwise slip through the cracks. But mostly NO, because more individual attention to needs of each student is necessary. More concentrating on each student's goals with a pull-out model.

No, I feel that I get more through to some students, especially category A, on a one on one basis. I do think that integration is good at times. The exposure to the regular classroom is a real asset to some students.

The best way for b/b children is having a program that will provide b/b children to learn English first before they go to the regular classrooms. But I would still choose to integrate, because the student needs to get along with the classmates at school. As a helper, I like to know what she/he needs.

I feel integration is excellent for some students but not for all. Those that feel successful in the classroom should stay there. Those that feel pressured need to be pulled out for small group instruction, previewing subject or project, then join classroom with pre-knowledge to feel successful.

Yes, the students need to feel that they can do the same work as the other students. It builds their self-esteem and they are able to make friends during class projects or discussions.

Yes. Help student adjust to new life. Achieve normalcy as soon as possible without looking and feeling overly "different."

Yes, I would. It is good to observe the teachers' methods so I can help the students.

If I were to be given this choice once again, I would definitely not integrate.

I think it is very good. I am happy to be part of it.

Integration can work to a point. If student does not have basics, then pull-out is better. If all he needs is a little "umph" then it's better to integrate and give other slightly behind students an "umph" too.

I think my situation is odd because I work at so many different schools with a relatively low number of students. Integration causes a problem for me, especially in the area of scheduling -- too many teachers and too many different school schedules (22 students and 15 teachers). I pull-out my students far more than I use integration. Mostly this is an agreement between me and the classroom teacher.

The integration of special services for b/b is great. How about a special b/b program for children to learn English before they go to the regular classroom?

My overall feeling of the integration has been positive. We still need more sharing time with staff to review new methods of ESL education as well as how to work with teachers (vice versa). I also feel that a bilingual school should be established for all students coming into the district. They should attend for six months to one year only until they have accomplished successful survival skills for the classroom setting, then exit. B/b tutors still provide services when exited from B/b school, but this way a stable foundation is established and classroom teachers are not overwhelmed with what to do with these students.

I think the integration works very well for the time we have with the kids and cultural differences.

A combination of integrated and pull-out services seems to be best. Neither one exclusively is good.

It would help to focus on conversational language skills until students seem ready for integration.

It works only when there is flexibility and when we get to know the students well enough. Being sensitive to their needs is as important as how much learning they are doing.

Responses from Alaska Native Education Service Providers

**If the district had not established a goal to provide special services such as the Alaska Native Education program in integrated settings, would you choose to integrate? Why or why not?**

Yes. It all depends on the teacher and the student. If some students don't want to be singled out as "Native" students, then integration is necessary.

If the student is C or above, it would work. When student is D or F it would be better to be a pull-out.

Yes.

No. More quality time with the student. While pulling out the student you find what the problem is behind the bad grade, not just that there is a problem in that study area.

Not sure.

I would choose to integrate because I think pulling kids out of the class is somewhat segregationistic, and by being in the classroom I get a better understanding of what the teacher is expecting from the students and the methods that are being used.

Yes, to help a child advance academically.

No.

It depends on the grade, teacher, time wanted, number of days per week.

I would because it would reach more students and be more effective overall to do so.

Depends on students' grades.

Both have advantages and disadvantages.

It all varies on students!

I think it is time to try a different model. Integration is not working for ANE students.

I do not think the current method of integration is successful due to various reasons. I believe the most important reason is the regular classroom teachers do not appreciate or take advantage of services (help) for some students that are in need of attention and assistance.

I'll call you to discuss this.

I do not do much integrating. This survey is based on what I have done. Native students do not want to be singled out any more than they already are. When a Native person comes into the classroom, everyone knows who they are there for. When I find a class with four or more students these settings work pretty well. This is hard to find when there are only 100 to 120 students out of 1500. I have had very good results working with 1-5 students at a time in a pull-out situation. Also a lot more pull-out services are available but many teachers will not allow students to come due to attendance., etc. Sometime used as a reward system. I don't think this is good.

Yes, because often certain children will spend more time out of the classroom than in.

## APPENDIX F

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *REPORT ON PROGRESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS IN REGULAR EDUCATION ENVIRONMENTS*

# FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Report on Progress and Recommendations for the Inclusion of All Students in Regular Education Environments

## Executive Summary

June, 1989

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Education Policy and Program Solutions
Reston, Va.

# Executive Summary

## I. Purpose

The purpose of the review was to examine Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) programs in terms of educating children with handicaps in the least restrictive environment. This review was requested by FNSBSD because:

1. Educating children with handicaps in the least restrictive environment is required by law, therefore, FNSBSD was interested in analyzing its special education programs in terms of their effectiveness in ensuring that "resource" students and "non resource" students are being educated together.

2. Educating children with handicaps in the least restrictive environment is a national priority set forth by the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

3. Educating children with handicaps in the least restrictive environment will be the focus of the Alaska State Department of Education audit of special education programs.

4. Educating children with handicaps in the least restrictive environment is an increasing concern of parents.

5. Research on educating children with handicaps in the least restrictive environment has shown to be a more effect approach than the traditional "pull-out" approach.

Further, the review was to provide recommendations for future activities at the classroom, building, and district level which can assist in ensuring that the district continues to effectively administer such programs.

## II. Description of Review

The reviewers were David Rostetter and Dawn Hunter who are consultants based in Reston, Virginia with experience in assisting Federal, State, and local education agencies in providing programs to students which afford opportunities for all students to be educated together. To carry out the purpose of the review, Dr. Rostetter and Dr. Hunter: (a) observed classrooms; (b) interviewed and held discussions with teachers, principals, administrators, and parents; and (c) reviewed and analyzed documents. The on site component of the review was carried out April 17 - 21.

During the on site review, fourteen different school buildings were visited and fifteen additional hours were spent in discussions with staff and administrators. The on site consultation also served to provide direct assistance to staff at the instructional and administrative levels in the areas of techniques and strategies for providing services to students in integrated settings. In addition, ten actual contact hours of inservice training were provided. The inservice training activities focused primarily on specific actions and approaches which could be taken by staff to foster "inclusive" schools (e.g., staffing alternatives, effective communication strategies, strategies for cooperative learning, administrative structures, funding, community based instruction, assessment and curriculum content, behavior management techniques). Finally, the reviewers taught a one credit course (fourteen hours) titled "Integrating the Learner with Handicaps into Regular Education Environments" (University of Alaska - ED 593) which was attended by 27 FNSBSD staff members and parents.

## III. Acknowledgement of Staff and Parent Efforts

The reviewers want to formally acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of all the staff and parents we met with during the visit. The positive and productive nature which characterized all of the interactions was a clear indication of the very real and active commitment to the provision of quality education and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills to fulfill that commitment. While reports of this kind too often accentuate the negative, this report is intended to reinforce and support all of the excellent hard work observed.

## IV. Major Questions Addressed and Framework of Report

The review, focused on seven major issue areas which were primarily developed by FNSBSD. The issues were refined and made more operational by the reviewers prior to the actual on site visit through the identification of specific questions to assist in data collection and analysis. The additional questions were added to ensure that the original issues were addressed in the most comprehensive manner possible. The major issue areas addressed by the review and the Report were:

Issue 1: Degree of Integration

Issue 2: Use of Models of Integration

Issue 3: Management of Integration

Issue 4: Efficacy of Integration Efforts

Issue 5: Adequacy of Resources

Issue 6: Role of Related Services in Relation to Integration

Issue 7: Additional Concerns

## V. Findings and Recommendations

Two essential observations can be made. First, the support among parents and staff for the overall direction and implementation of the educational program is extraordinary. The administrative personnel should be commended for providing the leadership necessary for establishing a supportive and facilitative environment. Second, the basic approach of establishing a general goal and direction for integrating students with handicaps in the least restrictive environment and allowing school specific alternatives to develop is working very well and is resulting in innovative and positive efforts to provide quality programs. The complete Report contains many specific recommendations for staff at all levels. The following are recommendations which effect overall FNSBSD strategies and approaches for further progress in integrating students with handicaps into least restrictive environments.

### 1. Organize for Change and Ensure Institutionalization.

In order to successfully implement the overall goals FNSBSD should:

a. Establish a clear sense of overall direction and endorsement. While efforts must be based at each school site to ensure ownership and creativity, the District policy makers (i. e. the Board and Superintendent) should formally embrace the goals so that local site initiatives are clearly consistent with the overall direction the leadership wishes to take.

b. Plan and monitor collaboratively. Make certain that the planning efforts are focused and are integrated vertically (significant players in the power structure), and horizontally (administrators, teachers, other professionals, other staff, and parents). This can be accomplished by choosing a few specific schools at first and building teams of people.

c. Adapt internal and external expertise. Rely on FNSBSD staff as innovators and leaders and mix in catalysts and experts to support staff in their efforts and keep them current.

d. Revise materials to meet local needs. Do not reinvent the wheel, but also do not take things from one place and just plug them in at other sites. They usually do not fit. It is important to have a sense of commitment which comes from group efforts to develop and adapt ideas, programs and materials.

e. Model desired behavior. If you want a goal to be reached, the entire District must commit to an "integrated posture". This means that decisions involving placement of students with handicaps are made first in terms of integration into the least restrictive environment. Good integration practices should be rewarded. Inequities and practices that isolate children needlessly must be met head on.

f. Offer training as an integral part of activities. Always build into the Plan for accomplishing the initiative, the training necessary to accomplish it. This will not only impart skills, it will convey a sense of seriousness and commitment.

g. Build and maintain support systems. Stay on top of what is happening and give those responsible the authority to monitor and make changes as necessary.

h. Keep at it. Establish a realistic schedule and stay with it. Five years is about what this should take.

2. Develop and Implement a "Comprehensive Integration Plan".

a. This plan should detail the District's integration goals (mission statement), philosophy on integration, short and long term objectives, and outline current best practices. It should also establish a schedule for development.

b. Create a district-wide Integration Planning Team (IPT) composed of central office staff, representatives from each BBIPT (see c.), parents, and, if possible a school board member, to develop the Comprehensive Integration Plan described above (see a.). This IPT should take a lead role in disseminating newly developed district policies and practices to all buildings in the district.

c. Create three to four Building Based Integration Planning Teams (BBIPT). These teams should be led by the building principal and be charged with the developing and implementing an integration model for their site. Ensure close communication between the BBIPT as plans are developed and put into practice. Develop strategies for institutionalizing those initiatives that have been successful and problem solve to eliminate both identified and anticipated barriers to integration.

d. Develop a formalized structure to "monitor" integration activities at both the school building level and the district level.

    - Collect data on student outcomes, staff time, staff perceptions, parent perceptions, and cost.
    - Reinforce the authority of those responsible at critical times.
    - Evaluate staff on specific components of integration.

e. Include strategies for a "community awareness - public relations campaign" on integration.